

The Star Evangel.

A STUDY OF THE
ANCIENT CONSTELLATIONS; AND THEIR
RELATION TO BIBLE TRUTH.

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NETT : BOARDS—PAPER, 1s. 6d. ; CLOTH, GILT, 2s. 6d.

"THE FAITH" PRESS, LIMITED.

MALVERN :—Cyrus E. Brooks, Colston House, Malvern Link.

LONDON :—Digby, Long & Co., 18 Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

ADELAIDE :—C. Gamble, Magill Road, Stepney.

MELBOURNE :—W. Broadbent, 52 Lower Flat, Eastern Market.

AUCKLAND :—Evan. and Pub. Asso.—L. Webber, Upper Queen Street.

1904.

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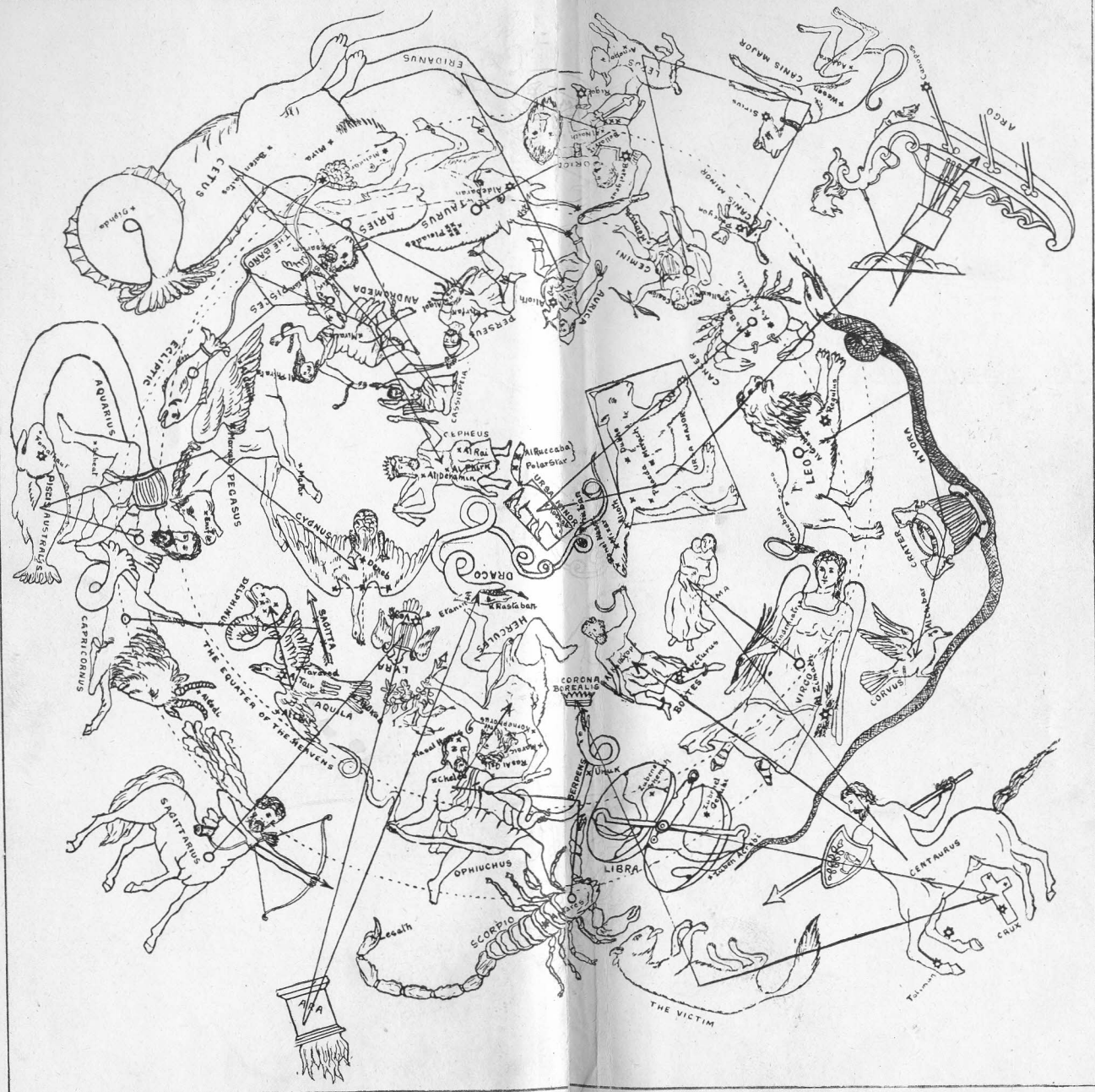
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PREFACE.

IT has been stated by a noted archæologist that "very few scholars in recent times have studied the history of the constellations." That which he asserts as true of the history, is certainly true of another important aspect of the constellations, which may be put in the question : What was the object of those who pictured the heavens as covered with frescoes? These signs were "the common property of the earlier civilised world, as they have been accepted and adopted by the whole of modern civilisation." What was the intent of the originators of the Sphere? If "certain fixed ideas" were enshrined in this picture-book, can we know what they were? If we can discover them the investigation necessary will yield us a harvest of result which will repay us a thousand-fold for our quest.

The pages that follow contain an attempt to give a reasonable and satisfactory answer to the problem. The author believes that the evidence obtainable yields abundant testimony to the prominence in the Sphere of the two great themes which are central in the Bible,—the Life and the Kingdom. He bespeaks the thoughtful attention of all interested in these topics to the evidence adduced.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to those who have preceded me in this fruitful investigation, and whose works have been carefully consulted throughout. Miss Rolleston's *Mazzaroth*; Dr. Seiss's *The Gospel in the Stars*; and Dr. Bullinger's *Witness of the Stars*, are the important works dealing with this matter, and I commend them to the student desirous of further help.

In preparation for this work I have read extensively in astronomical literature, and I am largely indebted to many writers who have contributed more or less relevantly to the elucidation of the subject. I would add to this that my own pleasure in the study of the heavens has largely aided to make the writing of this book a labour of love.

My thanks are also due to my dear friend the Rev. G. P. McKay, minister of Devonshire Square Chapel, London, for kindness in proof-reading. I need scarcely add that this kindness does not involve necessary agreement with the view presented.

Boston Road, Auckland.

INTRODUCTION.

"Why did not some one teach me the constellations, and make me at home in the starry heavens, which are always overhead, and which I don't half know to this day."

CARLYLE.

PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

WE have pleasure in co-operating with the Author—our old and valued friend—in placing before the public a new and cheap work on—as the Author has very aptly termed it—“THE STAR EVANGEL.” The Heavenly Bodies are a fascinating study in themselves, quite apart from the question of their mystic meaning, but increasingly so in the light of their ancient Divine teaching, as unfolding the story of the Fall and Redemption; of Death and Life Eternal; of the ultimate Triumph of God and Good over Satan and Evil.

Owing to the distance of the Author from our Publishing Office, precluding him from seeing the proof sheets, a few errors have passed unnoticed, which we here note.

ERRATA.

- On page 18, read 2,000 years,—in place of 4,000.
“ ” 23, “ not earlier than, 2,800 B.C.,—in place of not later.
“ ” 45, “ *Chelae* the claws,—in place of *Chelac*.
“ ” 49, “ *Al Phecca*,—in place of *Al Phecea*.
“ ” 55, “ *Fomalhaut*,—in place of *Tomalhaut*.
“ ” 59, “ *Manilius*,—in place of *Marilius*.
“ ” 99, “ *Shedar*,—in place of *Sledar*.
“ ” 101, “ *Hevelius*,—in place of *Helvelius*; and 331 days for 334.
“ ” 110, “ *Benoth*,—in place of *Beroth*.
“ ” 113, “ *Betelgeuse*,—in place of *Betelguese*.
“ ” 116, “ footnote, *Herschel*,—in place of *Herschell*.



CHAPTER I.

THE SUBJECT STATED.

*“I heard the trailing garments of the night
Sweep through the marble halls;
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls.”*

LONGFELLOW.

IT is no part of the author's intention to advance the idea that in the stars is to be found the Christian revelation of the plan of salvation, nor will the matter be presented as supplementary to that. The purpose will be to show that from the beginning God has not left men without a witness, not only of His “everlasting power and divinity,” but of His ultimate

purpose in redemption for man and for the race. However it comes to pass, it is as reasonably certain as anything can well be that with the stars which look down upon the earth night after night, unchanged from age to age, there has been associated from the earliest ages the great purpose of redemption. When this is compared with the written revelation the marvellous likeness between them must compel the assent of the mind to the proposition that both originated from one author.

Many years ago there was published a book which I read with pleasure. It was entitled "Primeval Man Unveiled." One portion of that book aroused an interest which has never slackened. In the course of a discussion on Antediluvian Theology, the author contended that in the absence of a written revelation, the doctrine of redemption was inscribed upon the heavens and linked with the discoveries of astronomical science, "so that the heavens might declare the glory of God, and that this precious doctrine might be handed down from father to son and from sage to sage without daring to make any change." The interest then awakened induced a search for the evidence on which such a theory rests, and in the course of that time I have found that the mass of testimony to be adduced is wonderful in its extent and fulness. Other students have taken up this subject, and a literature is being produced which so puts the matter before its readers that as they gaze into the heavens they may read again the story told by the stars to the world's grey fathers.

In the year 1885, Dr. Seiss, of Philadelphia, U.S.A., a divine well-known for his many writings on prophecy, issued a book of over 500 pages, entitled "The Gospel in the Stars," in which this great matter is set forth in fascinating style. In 1893, Dr. Bullinger, of London, a well-known Bible scholar, published an illustrated work, called "The Witness of the Stars." Both these writers are largely indebted to another

(Miss Rolleston), who has patiently collected a mass of information from varied sources, and embodied it in a book called "Mazzaroth, or the Constellations." In addition to these, much valuable information is to be found in the ordinary books on astronomy, not indeed in the way of developing the theory, but information which, not accounted for by astronomers, is easily explainable when the truth is seen.

It is well to remember in our reading of the Bible that nearly half the life-history of the human race is covered by the book of Genesis. Its records cover 2,369 years. In addition it is well to bear in mind that probably for more than 2,500 years the world was without a written revelation from God. Yet, that which we see in the record itself shows us clearly that God did not leave Himself without witness, for the story of His interventions, and the agreement entered into, indicate that His being, His claims upon men, and His covenants, were known to them. "All the purposes of creation we cannot begin to fathom or comprehend. No plummet line of human understanding can reach the bottom of such depths. We stand on solid ground, however, when we say and believe that the intention of the physical universe is to declare and display the majesty and glory of the Creator. Hence the apostolic assertion, 'The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived by the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity.' But the particular ends and objects included in this grand purpose are as multitudinous and diverse as the things themselves."

As leading up to this, let us look at one item in the story of creation. When the "lights" of the firmament were made it was said expressly, "And let them be for *signs*, and for seasons, and for days, and for years." And that there should be no mistake as to what was included in this, it is said, "The Stars also." Now, there is no doubt as to the relation of the

heavenly bodies to season, days, and years, but of what are they "signs"? We may be wrong in our finding of the answer to this question, but there is surely nothing opposed to the Bible in endeavouring to find out, especially if we first ask what is the nature of the testimony which the Bible itself gives on the subject? "A sign is something arbitrarily selected to represent some other thing. The letters of the alphabet are signs, signs of sounds and numbers. The notes on a clef of musical writing are signs, signs of the pitch and value of certain tones of voice or instrument. There is no relation whatever between these signs and the things they signify, except that men have agreed to employ them for that purpose; and so with all signs. . . . When God said, 'Let them be for signs,' He meant them to be used to signify something beyond and additional to what they evidence and express in their nature and natural offices. Nor can any sense be naturally deduced from the words, consistent with the dignity of the record, without admitting that God intended from the beginning that these orbs of light should be made to bear, express, and convey some special teaching, different to what is naturally deducible from them."¹

There are certain incidents in the Bible, historic or prophetic, which are supposed to cover this expression. Abraham is bidden to look upon the stars that studded the firmament, and was assured that "so shall thy seed be," and, doubtless, every time he lifted his eyes and saw them shining down upon him he would remember the promise. In the workings of the future we are assured that there shall be signs in "the stars." But is it certain that these exhaust the signification of the early expression in Genesis, "they shall be for signs"?

It is noteworthy that the Scripture emphatically

¹ *Gospel in the Stars*, by Dr. Seiss, p. 20.

declares that the Creator has both numbered and named the stars. Here are passages in proof:—

"Lift up your eyes on high,
And see who hath created these,
That bringeth out their host *by number*;
He calleth them all by name;
By the greatness of His might,
And for that He is strong in power,
Not one is lacking."

—Isa. xl. 26.

"*He telleth the number of the stars*;
He giveth them all their names."

—Psa. cxlvii. 4.

These texts declare that the stars are numbered and named. Now there is the further question, Has the Scripture given any of these names? The answer to this is easily found. In the book of Job, believed by many students to be the oldest book in the Bible, and to be originated amongst a people outside the historic range of the Abrahamic Covenant, there occur several names:—

"Which maketh the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades,
And the chambers of the South."

—Job. ix. 9.

"Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,
Or loose the bands of Orion?
Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season?
Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?"

—Job. xxxviii. 31, 32.

Commentators agree generally that the constellation of the Dragon is referred to in the following passage:—

"By His Spirit the heavens are garnished;
His hand hath pierced the swift (marg. fleeing, or
gliding) serpent."—Job. xxvi. 13.

Here, then, are certain names which have come down to us to-day, attached to certain groups of stars. These groups are important members of a complete

system of constellations. Their names are related to the names of other groups not mentioned in the Scriptures, but belonging to the system. In ancient Bible times the names of men and places have significations agreeing with their characters, or the purpose to which they minister. It is not too much to affirm at this stage that if God named the stars, and the names cited from the book of Job are some of these, then they have a meaning, and in each case the meaning is related to the story of redemption. This will appear in the course of our further studies. I cite the fact now, as preparatory to the next step to be taken. God named the stars. The names are significant, and men knew them and employed them. With what object?

In Rom. x. 18 Paul quotes the following passage:—

“Their sound went out into all the earth,
And their words unto the end of the world.”

Let us ask the question, Whose words? Whose sound? The answer is found by turning to the passage itself in Psa. xix.:—

“*The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament sheweth His handiwork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language;
Their voice cannot be heard.
Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.*”

—Psa. xix. 1-4.

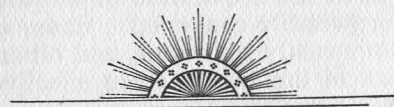
Our answer is found. The “words” of the heavens have gone forth, and their testimony is borne to the glory of God. It is customary to agree to this, and say, “Certainly, the glory of God in creation is manifested by the order and beauty of the heavenly bodies.” But, we ask, who authorised such a limitation? The testimony of the written revelation is to the “glory” of God in redemption, as well as to His

glory in creation. It bears evidence to the full-orbed glory of God, for creation without redemption is not perfected. I am of those who believe that the testimony of the heavens is given to the full-orbed glory of God, to redemption as well as to creation; that not only are His wisdom and power shown thereby, but His Love and Grace are witnessed to in the story told in the heavenly writing, which records the Conflict with evil, the Triumph of the Redeemer, and the Blessing of Man. If this can be shown, then in a more comprehensive sense than the poet dreamed of, will it be seen that:—

“Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written in those stars above.”

LONGFELLOW.

So much by way of introduction. It is chiefly assertion, it may be said at the present stage. In succeeding chapters I hope to more than justify what has been advanced, and, if possible, at the same time to make the written revelation more highly esteemed; for the story of the stars is the outline of the story in the Bible.



CHAPTER II.

THE HEAVENLY PICTURE-BOOK.

“Some man of yore
A nomenclature thought of and devised,
And forms sufficient found

* * * * *

So thought he good to make the stellar groups
That each by other lying orderly,
They might display their forms

And thus the Stars
At once took names and rise familiar now.

ARATUS.

IN THESE days instruction is made easy, pleasant and helpful, by a multiplicity of pictures. Wherever possible, the subject to be taught is illustrated by diagrams, drawings, or pictures. Even our ordinary reading is made more attractive by the artist's pencil, or the photographer's skill. From the educational point of view, illustration helps to impress upon the mind the subject to be taught, because it aids the sense of sight in the acquisition of knowledge; thus ideas are more readily conveyed. Some acquire and remember more easily by sound, and others by sight, but the union of the two is more effective to secure deep mental impressions.

This has been understood, and, as far as possible, acted upon from the earliest days. Indeed, the letters of the alphabet—the beginning of written literature—were originally pictures of things animate or inanimate. The rude sketches inscribed on rocks, and dating from the earliest ages of human history, represent more to

us than the mere fact that the artist sought to picture some form. They tell us of a desire to convey pleasure, or information to others. The pictures served for illustrative and memorial purposes. The Old Testament gives instances of the manner in which in bygone times the children of Israel were taught by mnemonic devices how to keep in remembrance and to perpetuate the record of divine interpositions, and the promises of purposes yet to be fulfilled. There is no reason to assume that such provision was confined to Israel, or limited to the matters then revealed.

When we turn our attention to the star-lit sky above us, one of the first things that we learn regarding it is, that from the very earliest days it has been conceived to be a vast picture-book, containing strange figures. The forms of these, supposed to be represented in the sky, have been handed down to us from the dimmest antiquity, and with but slight variations are the same in number and form, in almost every land. “These signs were known among all nations and in all ages. From the almost antediluvian chronologies of China, India and Egypt, to the traditions of the recently-discovered Islands of the South Sea, traces of them are discerned most clearly among the most ancient and earliest civilised nations. In the remains of Assyria they are recognised; in those of Egypt they are perfectly preserved; in those of Etruria and Mexico they are traceable.”¹ “These constellation forms were the common property of the greater part of the earlier civilised world as they have been accepted and adopted by the whole modern civilisation.”² “From a great antiquity men have looked upwards to the heavens and have pictured thereon, in their own thought, certain forms which we have inherited from them by long tradition; forms which became so real

¹ *Mazzaroth*, p. 15.

² *Primitive Constellations*, Vol. I. p. 9.

to them that the stars themselves, of which they compose them, seem to fade out or to be but as the nails which keep the pictures in position, whilst the forms remain the real objects which fill the heavens. The old figures and names, therefore, which are associated with the stars, and which we now find on star-globes or in star-atlases, make up the oldest picture-book that has come down to us."³

This picture-book is known to us as the Zodiac. The accompanying plate gives a view of the forms and their position, as assigned by the original designers. A count will show that the constellations pictured are forty-eight in number. There is extant a poem written about 270 B.C. by Aratus. At the request of the King of Macedonia he put into poetic forms an astronomical work relating to these 48 signs. "Aratus called his work *Diosemeia* (*the divine signs*). He was a native of Tarsus, and it is interesting for us to note that his poem was known to, and, indeed, must have been read by, the Apostle Paul, for he quotes it in his address on Mars Hill."⁴ (Acts xvii. 28.) Scholars affirm that Aratus describes the Zodiac, not as it was in his own day, but as the stars were seen some 4,000 years before. They were not seen from Tarsus as he describes them, and he must therefore have copied them from a then ancient Zodiac.

What, then, is the Zodiac? The word denotes a *way* or *step*. Along a path in the heavens known to us as the Ecliptic, the sun seems to make an annual revolution of the heavens. This path is a nature-indicated belt, about sixteen degrees wide, extending round the entire circuit of the heavens, half the year north, and half the year south of the equator of the earth extended into the sky. It is divided into twelve sections, through each of which the sun journeys

³ *Nineteenth Century*, September 1900. E. W. Maunder.

⁴ *Witness of the Stars*, p. 13.

in the course of a month, so that at the end of the twelfth month he appears about where he started at the beginning of the first month. Each of these steps or sections contains a number of stars, which make up a group or constellation, which has its own particular figure, picture, or "sign" to designate it, and after which it is called. These are familiar to us in the memory verse:—

"The RAM, the BULL, the heavenly TWINS,
And next the CRAB, the LION shines,
The VIRGIN and the SCALES;
The SCORPION, ARCHER and SEA-GOAT,
The MAN that carries the Water-pot,
And FISH with glittering tails."

This is the order in which they stand, and which has been the order always. Look at the chart and follow the line of the Ecliptic round, beginning with Virgo, and note the figures in their order. I copy the description from Dr. Seiss:—

"1. VIRGO, the Virgin: the figure of a young woman lying prostrate, with an ear of wheat in one hand, and a branch in the other.

"2. LIBRA, the Scales: the figure of a pair of balances, with one end of the beam up and the other down, as in the act of weighing. In some of the old planispheres a hand, or a woman, appears holding the scales.

"3. SCORPIO, the Scorpion: the figure of a gigantic, noxious, and deadly insect, with its tail and sting uplifted in anger, as if striking.

"4. SAGITTARIUS, the Bowman: the figure of a horse with the body, arms and head of a man—a centaur—with a drawn bow and arrow pointed at the scorpion.

"5. CAPRICORNUS, the Goat: the figure of a goat sinking down as in death, with the hinder part of its body terminating in the vigorous tail of a fish.

"6. AQUARIUS, the Waterman: the figure of a man with a large urn, the contents of which he is in the act of pouring out in a great stream from the sky.

"7. PISCES, the Fishes: the figures of two large fishes in the act of swimming, one to the northward, the other with the ecliptic.

"8. ARIES, the Ram, by some nations called the Lamb: the figure of a strong sheep, with powerful curved horns, lying down in easy composure, and looking out in conscious strength over the field around it.

"9. TAURUS, the Bull: the figure of the shoulders, neck, head, horns, and front feet of a powerful bull, in the attitude of rushing and pushing forward with great energy.

"10. GEMINI, the Twins: two human figures closely united, and seated together in endeared affection.

"11. CANCER, the Crab: the figure of a crab, in the act of taking and holding on with its strong pincer claws.

"12. LEO, the Lion: the figure of a great rampant lion, leaping forth to rend, with his feet over the writhing body of Hydra, the serpent which is in the act of fleeing."

These are the twelve main star-groups; they lie in the pathway of the sun, and it is evident that the other groups have been framed in relation to them. Of these others there are 36, and they have been assigned as companions to the main constellations—three to each. They are called *Decans*, from the Shemitic

dek—a "part" or "piece."⁵ As a general rule they can be distinguished by the fact that they come upon the meridian, or close along the meridian line, with the signs to which they belong. In the chart they will be easily noted by the connecting lines drawn from the main sign to each decan in order. It will be noted too, that many of these have been designed in groups, for they are inseparably connected: indeed, in some cases the same stars are used for parts of two figures. As an instance of this inter-relation, notice the Scorpion with outstretched claws endeavouring to seize the Scales. His tail is uplifted in the act of striking the Serpent-holder, whose foot is planted upon the head of the noxious insect. The Serpent-holder is engaged in a struggle with a writhing snake, which is seeking to seize the Crown. The stars forming the head of Ophiuchus are used again to make the head of another hero, who holds in his left hand a knot of writhing serpents, which he smites with uplifted club, whilst his foot is descending upon the head of the great Dragon, which winds its tortuous length about the pole. This group clearly illustrates the fact that there was a definite object sought to be attained by the designer. The interdependence of the designs show that they could not be accidental, and it is certainly clear from the interdependence that the entire picture-book is a single concerted work, intended to convey some instruction to men, and to embody it in a form easily remembered. The fact that tradition gives it such a view must also count for something. Its close connection with Grecian mythology is an evidence of this. The most recent writer on the

⁵ Decans—"belts of stars extending round the heavens, the risings of which follow each other by ten days or so." Said to have been introduced into Egypt by King Necepsos, about 730 B.C. Albumazer says of them, that "they were known all over the world and had caused long speculation, and that many had attributed to them a divine and even a *prophetic* virtue."—*Mazzaroth*, Part II. p. 75.

subject, Mr. E. W. Maunder, of the Greenwich Observatory, says: "Many of the constellations then were mapped out to express the religious beliefs of the designers." A statement and an admission which, coming from so high an authority, ought to have some weight with us as we embark upon the endeavour to find the nature of the teaching conveyed to early mankind by this wonderful "oldest picture-book of all."

Now observe the constituent figures of this picture-scroll. "In the 48 constellations we have 54 figures, as some of the constellations contain two or more. Out of these 54 we find ten men, three women, two centaurs, close together, five fishes, all close together, two eagles, close together, three snakes, two crowns, two goats, two streams. The designs that are not repeated are distinctly in the minority, being only 16 out of 54." Yet, look into the heavens as we may, there is nothing visible which even suggests these figures. In the month of March, for instance, the constellation of Virgo comes up in the East. On the first of the month, its bright star Spica will be visible on the horizon, late in the evening. Look carefully at it, and the attendant stars. There is nothing to suggest the human form; still less to show whether it is man or woman. Yet it has been always agreed that the form drawn around or connected with this group of stars is a picture of a woman, who is known as the Virgin. So with all other groups. The most like are perhaps the Crown and the Scorpion, but even here imagination must play a large part to make the picture complete.

From this set of pictures astronomers have been able to determine approximately the place where it was originally designed, and at what period of the world's history. It is very interesting and instructive to follow their line of search, but it is not part of my purpose to present it here. The matter is very clearly and fascinatingly put by Mr. Maunder in an article in

the *Nineteenth Century* for September, 1900.⁶ Suffice it to say that there is general agreement that it must have originated about the Euphratean Valley, or by the shores of the Caspian Sea, and not later than the year 2800 B.C.

That which is thus determined from a consideration of the pictured Zodiac is confirmed to a remarkable extent by monument and tradition. The latter assigns its origin to some of the earliest members of the race, — Adam, or Seth, or Enos. The monuments—tablets, boundary stones, and astronomical tables show that as far back as human history goes, these signs were known and generally used in the Euphratean Valley. Recently there were issued from the press two costly volumes on the "Primitive Constellations," written by Robert Brown, jun., a well-known student of archæology, and these are packed with evidence which shows the early currency of these forms, and the important place they occupied in astronomical and astrological lore. Further, this writer agrees with others, that the pictures were first in thought, and expressed some definite idea, and they were then drawn around or connected with a particular group of stars to perpetuate that idea.

Here, then, we have before us that ancient picture-book, whose hieroglyphs we will essay to read, in the hope that we may find that which will be instructive and which will illustrate and confirm the statement that ere yet the written revelation was given, God did not leave Himself without witness, and that in the sky "domed above us with its heavenly frescoes, painted by the thought of the Great Artist," the sons of men possessed in pictured outline the story of His great redemption.

It will add to the interest of the study if the reader will make himself acquainted with the constellations

⁶ A recent book on *Astronomy without a Telescope*, by the same writer, contains much solid information on that subject.

as they appear in the heavens, in their orderly succession, for then as their meaning is learned, the stars, as they come into view, will call to mind the story they tell,—never-failing memory links, to bring up Redemption's story and the Glory of God, which they declare.

One remark must be added, that is, the picture-book was constructed for peoples north of the Equator. The North Pole is its centre. In the Southern Hemisphere the stars which immediately encircle the North Pole are not seen. On the other hand, some of the stars in this picture, which, because of the shifting of the Pole, have long ceased to be visible in the latitudes where the pictures were constructed, are in full view of the dwellers in Southern lands.



CHAPTER III.

BOOKS AND CHAPTERS.

*"Field of glories! spacious field,
And worthy of the Master: He whose hand
With hieroglyphics, elder than the Nile,
Inscribed the mystic tablet; hung on high
To public gaze, and said, Adore, O Man!
The finger of thy God."*

SO ANCIENT are the constellation forms, that,—as already indicated, men have not hesitated to ascribe the picture outlines to Enoch, Seth and even Adam. Much research has been given to the question, but it is agreed that the delineations are so ancient that "the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." Says Professor Mitchell: "We delight to honour the names of Kepler, Galileo and Newton; but we must go beyond the epoch of the deluge, and seek our first discoveries among those sages whom God permitted to count their age by centuries, and there learn the order in which the secrets of the starry world yielded themselves up." Whatever the nature of early astronomical knowledge, and modern investigators rate it very highly, it is certain that it is associated with their knowledge and acceptance of these picture outlines.

To the Bible reader the most interesting evidence is that which is drawn from its pages. He finds that the constellation forms are older than its oldest books. The book of Job is usually viewed as probably the oldest book which the Bible contains, and it gives

clear testimony that the star-groups of the Zodiac and its Decans were familiarly known to the writer, and therefore to the men of his day. "From repeated astronomical allusions contained in this book, different mathematicians have calculated that Job lived and wrote somewhere about twenty-one hundred and fifty years before Christ, which carries us back more than one thousand years before Homer and the Greeks, and a millennium-and-a-half before Thales, the first of the Greek philosophers. And yet already, in the time of Job, the heavens were astronomically laid out and arranged in the manner just described, with the Zodiac formed, the constellations named, the figures of them drawn and recorded, and the same accepted and celebrated by God's people as the particular adornment of the sky in which to read the Almighty's glory." "There we read of '*Arcturus* and his sons,' 'the sweet influences of *Pleiades*,' 'the bands of *Orion*,' and 'the *fleeing serpent*.' We there likewise read of '*Mazzaroth*,' with its '*seasons*'—stations, stopping-places—which according to the margin of our English Bible, the Jewish Targum, and the ablest *Christian* interpreters, is nothing more or less than the Solar Zodiac."—*Seiss*. That which is thus clearly shown in the Bible is in these days of discovery and decipherment supported by the tablets dug up from the soil of old Babylonia and Assyria. These are facts which give colour to the traditions which assign the origin of these figures to the early men of the Adamic race, and which coupled with the inspired declaration that God has named the stars, go far towards supporting the view strongly held by some that in these picture-forms, linked with the face of the unchanging sky, is a revelation to man easily remembered because readily impressed—and by the law of association readily called to mind,—a revelation which declares the great purpose of redemption as it affects the world.

With the aid of the written revelation, which contains details not found in *The Star Evangel*, I trust that

we shall find our task easy and attractive. Ere we commence our exposition it will be well to look a little at the structure of this book. We have before us the accompanying chart of the pictures, but to understand the designs aright we must observe the manner in which they are related.

Modern writings are divided into books, chapters, and paragraphs, that we may obtain an orderly presentation of the author's theme. A careful study of these pictures shows an arrangement which corresponds to our books and chapters and sections. The twelve signs of the Zodiac are divided into three books of four signs each, and each book presents one main theme. Each sign may be viewed as a chapter, presenting a division of the main theme, and each of its attendant decans giving a phase of the topic introduced by the chapter. At the present stage this may appear to be assertion only, but I trust that as we pass through our reading of the book my readers will not only see the fact here stated, but will appreciate it. In any subject, if the student can obtain the idea of a definite plan existent in the thing studied, his task becomes easier, and his grasp of facts is more comprehensive. The relationship of the facts to each other is also more readily evident.

In agreement with other writers on this fascinating subject, I intend to put this matter before my readers in orderly form, and will use of each of the three great divisions of the Zodiac the term "book," and will call each of the four signs of each book a chapter—three books and twelve chapters. This much understood will put writer and reader in accord with each other.

Now comes the interesting question, Where shall we begin to read? "A circle has proverbially neither beginning nor end. In what order then are we to consider these signs? In the heavens they form a never-ending circle. Where is the beginning and where is the end of this circle through which the sun is constantly moving? Where are we to break into

this circle and say, *This is the commencement.*"¹ Only as we are able to determine this important question can we read this book. We offer suggestive evidence at this stage, and add that as the argument proceeds, it will be abundantly clear that the suggested point of commencement is the true one.

In the memory verse cited in the last issue, the popular beginning is at the sign of the Ram—the point of the vernal equinox. This is the starting-point in modern days, although the equinox is actually in Pisces. Five thousand years ago, it was in the centre of the constellation of the Bull. It is purely arbitrary to assume that we should commence our reading of the heavenly picture-book from the point of the vernal equinox, or indeed from either equinox or solstice. The exact point of commencement must be determined from the internal evidence afforded by the sphere itself.

Students interested in the reading of the heavenly picture-book are agreed that the initiatory sign of the Zodiac is the Virgin. The nature of the testimony which its structure affords points to this conclusion, and it is held that a witness to this is found in the land of Egypt. In the temple of Esneh there is a Zodiac which contains the figure of a Sphinx *between* the signs of Virgo and Leo, and it is suggested that it is thus placed as an indication that the circle begins with the Virgin and ends with Leo. In other words, that it is the mark which shows where to begin to read the Zodiac. It is noteworthy that in the ancient world there were very many representations of composite creatures, and the writer has long held that in these there is something more than a remembrance of the cherubic forms known to our first parents. But on turning to the pictured Zodiac, it will be seen that here also are composite forms. What more likely, then, than that to indicate the beginning and end of this

¹ *Witness of the Stars*, p. 20.

wondrous circle in the heavens, there should be adopted the form of the Sphinx, which unites the forms of the woman and the Lion. "Is not this what is spoken of as an unknown and insoluble mystery—'The riddle of the Sphinx?' The word 'Sphinx' is from *σφιγγω* to *bind closely together*. It was therefore designed to show where the two ends of the Zodiac were to be joined together, and where the great circle of the heavens begins and ends."²

Whether this view can be accepted or not, we shall commence with this sign in our endeavour to understand the heavenly picture-book, and we believe that so soon as its signification is perceived the justification of the method will be readily seen, because of the agreement between it and the written revelation. As the Bible story of redemption begins with "the seed of the woman," so also does the stellar record. As the Bible record closes with its heart-stimulating information concerning the victory of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, over all His foes, including the Great Serpent, so also does the star revelation. The Lion is victorious, and the cup of his wrath is fastened to the "fleeing serpent," and the unclean bird tears its flesh.

To avoid misapprehension it may be necessary here to say that the writer has no sympathy whatever with the so-called science of astrology, which teaches that the stars have certain influences upon individuals. But he does hold very strongly, that it is from the perversion of the original teaching that the astrological doctrines were derived, as also were the doctrines of the sect of the Sabians or star worshippers of ancient Chaldaea. To this day there is a remnant of those ancient Star-worshippers who adore the "host of heaven," and turn the symbols, designed as memory

² *Witness of the Stars*, p. 20. Greek tradition has it that the Sphinx was constructed "with Virgo's head on Leo's body, from the fact that the sun passed through those two constellations during the inundation of the Nile" (Allen, *Star Names*, p. 465).

hints to refresh the mind on divine truths, into objects of worship, and thus destroy their value. They "worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever." To the number of about four thousand this sect still survive in their native land, principally along the banks of the Euphrates. They call themselves *Mandaya*, Mandaites, possessors of the "word," the "living word." A writer in the London *Standard* gives a description, as eye-witness, of the annual festival of these people, during which they worship the Pole Star. During the whole of the elaborate ceremonies "the gaze of the worshippers is directed toward the North Star, which they call 'the world of light,' the primitive sun of the Star-worshippers' theogony, the paradise of the elect, and the abode of the pious hereafter." This is a sample of the manner in which the primitive use of the stars has been subverted. The astrological teachings seem to be a perversion of the original fact that the stars have some relation to mankind, but that relation has to do with them as "signs," and not as having such individual influence as determines the course of the life of a person. I deem it right to say these things at this juncture lest misunderstandings arise. My endeavour is to show that the stars have been divinely employed by God to perpetuate the story of world-redemption, and this because they afforded a series of abiding memory aids to the changing generations of mankind. The science of the magi, the guesses of the star-gazers, the doctrines of the astrologers, the ceremonies of the star-worshippers are but so many testimonies to the tendency of man to prostitute all God's gifts to the ministry of human pride. To the student they unerringly testify to an original, and that we should seek to find, that we may hold up the primitive truth, and by the brightness of its rays blast the errors and superstitions which have flourished begotten of man's forgetfulness and pride.

Some writers of sceptical tendencies have been

astonished to find the overwhelming strength of the testimonies to the ancient character of these heavenly signs, and noting their suggestive likeness to clear Bible teachings, have boldly claimed that these are the originals, and that some clever writers have constructed the Bible stories from them. This may be considered as a testimony to the likeness of the two, but it is to be noted that this view, though used to vitiate the Bible, leaves unexplained the origin of the figures, and their evident teaching. The purpose of this book will be to ascertain the meaning of the signs, and then to show how they harmonise with the written revelation which covers a wider ground, and supplies more of details, whilst it emphasises the same main facts.

As these are compared we shall be compelled to say—

"Whence but from heaven, could men unskilled in arts
 Weave such agreeing truths?"

With the main divisions settled, and the point of commencement agreed upon, we will open the first book of the heavenly volume and begin our reading.



BOOK I.

THE REDEEMER.

*When I survey the bright
Celestial sphere,
So rich with jewels hung, that night
Doth like an Ethiop bride appear ;
My soul her wings doth spread,
And heavenward flies,
The Almighty's mysteries to read
In the large volume of the skies.*

WILLIAM HABINGTON, 1605-45.

CHAPTER I.

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN.

*"Beneath Boötes' feet the Virgin seek,
 Who carries in her hand a glittering spike.
 Over her shoulder there revolves a star
 In the right wing superlatively bright;
 It rolls beneath the tail, and may compare
 With the bright stars that deck the Greater Bear.
 Upon her shoulder one bright star is borne,
 One clasps the circling girdle of her loins,
 One at her bending knee, and in her hand
 Glitters that bright and golden Ear of Corn."*

ARATUS.

HAVING determined the method of procedure in the reading of the Star Evangel, and decided to begin to read with the Sign of the Virgin, I now attempt the work of exposition. The First Book contains the four main signs, The Virgin, The Scales, The Scorpion, and The Archer. These with their attendant decans, or side-pieces, tell a complete story—a story which opens with the Woman and her Seed, and closes with the casting down of the Dragon. In its course it tells of the means whereby the Seed of the Woman accomplishes the overthrow of the Dragon.

In the written revelation the first hint of redemption from the sad results entailed by the sin of our first parents, is contained in the sentence passed upon the Serpent. "It (her seed) shall bruise thy head,

and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. iii. 15. Perhaps when her first-born came Eve hoped that this was he who would in due time fulfil the promise, but, alas! he became a murderer, and thus a helper of the serpent who had wrought such dire evil upon mankind. From that time it would seem that the earnest hope of womanhood was to bear the promised seed. The prophets of later Israel sketch in glowing language the joys that shall yet come to this sad earth, and Isaiah cries—

"Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
And shall call His name Immanuel."

—Isa. vii. 14.

When we open the New Testament, we find that promise and prophecy are fulfilled in a literal manner, for a virgin does conceive and bear a son. The evangelic history is occupied with the life and work of this Seed of the Woman, and we are compelled to note as we read this record that His labours all relate to the manner in which the redemption He has come to effect shall be accomplished. He pays down pledges of final victory, and, in direct conflict with the serpent power, He proves His power to work its final overthrow. Not only are we to see how He provides for the salvation of the individual sinner, but we are to see the bearing which His work has upon the great problem of the abolition of evil. Such in brief is the story of the written revelation.

The sign of the Virgin as it comes into view in the heavens tells the same story. Here, too, is the Seed of the Woman, the Desire of all nations who, despised and rejected, will yet come as the Great Harvester to gather His own as a part of His labours in the conquest over evil.

It is at least a striking coincidence that the first sign which comes before us in the heavenly present-

ment is the figure of a woman who, as she reclines in the path of the Zodiac, holds in her left hand an ear of corn, and in her right a branch. It is a yet more striking thing that this woman should be so universally known as a virgin. Such is the significance of the names which various peoples have given her. In Hebrew and Syriac she is *Bethulah*, the maiden. In Arabic she is *Adarah*, the pure virgin. In Greek she is *Parthenos*, the maid of virgin pureness, and in Latin, *Virgo*. "Thus she is the oldest purely allegorical representation of innocence and virtue."

But this does not exhaust all that is wonderful about this woman. In her hand is the ear of corn, and this has caused her to be named, the "Wheat-bearing Maiden," or the "Maiden of the Harvest." This wheat ear is marked by *Alpha*, a star of the first magnitude. The Latin name of which is *Spica*, the ear of corn. When the Greeks besought Philip, that they might see Jesus, the Lord said, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it beareth much fruit (John xii. 24). The ancient name of this star is to be noted. Its Arabic name *Al Zimach*, preserves to us the Hebrew *Tsemech*. "There are twenty words translated 'branch,' but only one of them (*Tsemech*) is used exclusively of the Messiah, and this word only four times" (Jeremiah xxiii. 5, 6; Zechariah iii. 8; vi. 12; Isaiah iv. 2).²

"The star *Beta* is called *Zavijaveh*, which means the gloriously beautiful, as in Isa. iv. 2. The star (*e*) in the arm bearing the branch is called *Al Mureddin*, which means *who shall come down* (as in

¹ In the translation of these star-names we follow in the main the learned author of "Mazzaroth." Drs. Seiss and Bullinger in their respective works on the subject, agree in these interpretations. See also the chapter on Star-Names.

² *Witness of the Stars*, p. 32.

is no beauty nor comeliness that he should be desired, yet tradition agrees in making him a beneficent teacher and healer of men. It is also affirmed that he was immortal in himself, but being wounded by an arrow not intended for him, he chose to die, and transferred his immortality to one of the sons of men. It needs no very great stretch of the imagination to say that, allowing for the weakening effect of tradition, here is much that agrees with those which were actually features of the Messiah, who was Son of God and Son of man; who was despised and rejected, yet was a beneficent Teacher and Healer, and though having the right to a Life not forfeited, He willingly gave it up for "the life of the world."

The two brilliant stars which mark the forefeet of the Centaur are invisible in England, but are always above the horizon to dwellers in New Zealand, and with the four bright stars of the Cross make a very conspicuous show. The brighter of these two stars (known as Alpha Centauri, the finest double star in the heavens) is named *Toliman*, which means *the heretofore and hereafter*, a name which, assigned to it by Ulugh Beigh, may indicate early observations of changes in its brightness, but which is a suitable name to be attached to a figure representing Him "which is, and which was, and which is to come." Some of the Centaur's stars were known to the early Arabs as *Al Kabd al Karm*, the *Vine Branch*. How appropriate in reference to Him who is at once the Branch and the True Vine.

"Thus these star pictures tell us that it would be as a child that the Promised Seed should come forth and grow and wax strong in spirit and be filled with wisdom (Luke ii. 40); and that as a man having two natures He should suffer and die. Then the third and last section in this first chapter of this first book goes on to tell of His second coming in glory."⁶

⁶ *Witness of the Stars*, p. 41.

III.—BOOTES.

In this constellation we have the figure of a man walking rapidly, carrying a spear in his right hand, and in his uplifted left a sickle. The Greeks called him Boötes, the Ploughman, but a man does not plough with uplifted hand, nor wield a sickle to drive his horses. Aratus called him Arctophylax, i. e., the guardian of Arctos (the Great Bear, or Flock).

"Behind and seeming to urge on the Bear,
Arctophylax, on earth Boötes named,
Sheds o'er the Arctic car his silver light."

It is believed that in this Greek name is a reminiscence of the ancient Hebrew, the Hebrew root *Bo* meaning *the coming*. The ancient Egyptians called him *Bau*, with meaning identical with the Hebrew, and *Smat*, which means *one who rules, subdues, and governs*. This is He who "cometh to judge the earth," who is at once the guardian of His people, and the great Harvester.

The names of the constituent stars are suggestive. Arcturus, the brightest star (in the left knee), two meanings are assigned to this, *He cometh*, and *Guardian*, or *Keeper*. Probably the ancient name of the whole constellation was Arcturus. Smith and Sayce have stated that on the Euphrates it was known as the *Shepherd of the Heavenly Flock* or, *Shepherd of the Life of Heaven*. The star μ in the spear head is *Al Katurops*, the *branch, treading under foot*. The star *Beta*, marking the head of the figure is *Nekkar*, the *pierced* (Zech. xii. 10). Other star names are *Merga*, who *bruises*, *Muphride*, who *separates*, *Mirac*, the *coming forth as an arrow*. The names agree with the figure, and show Him as the Coming Judge, Guardian, and Harvester. It is a heavenly picture associated with the stars, long before John penned that description of the same Person in Rev. xiv. 15, 16.

So we close the reading of this first chapter of this book. Therein is seen the Woman, prostrate but holding the Promised Seed, the vigorous and goodly Branch. There, too, is the Virgin's child, the Desire of all nations, re-seating the fallen who cherish and joy in Him. He is seen in the duality of His nature, despised and rejected of men, yet there rested on Him the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might. He is stricken, smitten, and afflicted, and gives up His life that others might have immortality, and again appears, but now as the strong and everlasting Ruler, Guardian, and Harvester, who will tread His enemies under foot and will preserve them that are His.

May I again urge my readers to look at the stars and try to identify the constellations referred to. Early in May, about nine in the evening and four minutes earlier each night, dwellers in the South may see the Centaur riding high in the heavens almost at the zenith. Looking North-east from the zenith the bright star Spica will be seen forming the bottom of a large Y, one arm of which stretches a little to the east of north, and the other to the north-west. Following the line from the zenith through Spica, we come to the bright star Arcturus, and the head of Boötes rests on the horizon. Under the northern branch of the Y of Virgo lies Coma.⁷ These once placed will not only give a basis for astronomical knowledge, but if the present teachings are followed, will help to recall the great truths of redemption which belong to God's plan for the salvation of man.

"If we may connect with every constellation, and each remarkable star, some divine truth, some prophetic annunciation, how adequately grand becomes the contemplation, how congenial the interpretation. If there we find recorded some hope, some promise

⁷ British readers can easily procure star charts in cheap form which will guide them in their search for these constellations.

given to the first parents of mankind to support them under the loss of innocence and of Eden, will not that memorial be equally precious even now, shining like the stars that bear it, with undiminished lustre, on us their remote descendants. So read the 'poetry of heaven' will become its Scripture, and its line once more go out to the ends of the earth, declaring the glory of God to every nation."⁸



⁸ *Mazzaroth*, Pt. I, p. 14.

CHAPTER II.

THE REDEMPTIVE WORK OF THE SEED.

*"None of them can by any means redeem his brother,
Nor give to God a ransom for him :
For the redemption of their soul is costly,
And must be let alone for ever."*

—Psa. xlix. 7.

"The Eternal Father hung His golden scales aloft."

ILIAD.

THE FIRST chapter of this heavenly picture-book shows us the Promised Seed of the woman, the Desired, yet the Despised and Rejected, and then leads us to contemplate the gracious fact, that He though scorned of men is the One who shall come, and as the Shepherd, Judge, and Harvester will deal righteously with men, and shall gather and bless His own. When we open the second chapter of this Book we find an important contribution to add to this initial study. So to say, we have in the first chapter the sweep of the outline before us, and each succeeding chapter supplies details which serve to fill in and complete the picture. Notice the fact; the earliest prophecy of the Bible has declared that the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's head, and that at least means that by the instrumentality of that Seed the work of the Evil One should be reversed. The first chapter of the Stellar story shows Him in three stages, as

Desired, then as come but not received of men, but still working beneficently for those who despised Him, then in a relationship to men that should make them consider well their present attitude towards Him. But we do not get any word as to that intimate relationship with man which is necessary if the consequences of the Fall are to be in any way reversed to him. However wide the extent of God's purposes, there must be a point at which they touch the individual. The written revelation shows what that is, and this sign of Libra, or the Balance, puts it beautifully before us.

Following the Virgin in the pathway of the Zodiac, is a pair of balances with one scale higher than the other. Says Dr. Seiss, "The figure of the Scales, or Balance, is found in all the Eastern, and the most ancient Zodiacs, the down side invariably towards the deadly Scorpion. In some instances the bowl on the low side was held by the Scorpion claws, whence in some of the Western Spheres, *Chelac, the Claws*, occasionally occupied the place of the Scales." The sacred books of India mention it as *Tula, a Balance*. Some investigators of the Ancient Euphratean signs believe that the original constellation here was an Altar, varied sometimes to that of a Censer, or a Lamp.

The Hebrew name for this sign is *Mozanaim, the Scales, weighing*. With this agrees its Latin name, *Libra, weighing*. The Coptic name is suggestive, *Lambadia, Station of propitiation*. What can be the meaning of this great pair of balances lying right across the path of the Zodiac? The same sign amongst men has been associated with the ideas of adjudications and adjustments relating to the trials of causes, in which so far as human powers are concerned the endeavour should be to give righteous judgment. If this story in the heavens relates the purpose of redemption, we should expect that this sign will bear somehow upon that, and will speak of some divine adjudication and adjustment.

Some help is afforded by noting the names of the prominent stars in the sign. In the southern scale is the brightest star, and this bears the name *Zuben al Genubi, the price deficient*. The star in the northern scale is *Zuben al Shemali, the price which covers*. A third star near to The Victim is called *Zuben al Akrabi, the price of the conflict*. Here, then, is a price placed in the scales and found wanting. May we not at this stage suggest how true this is of man and human effort; when placed in the balances they are found wanting. The price is deficient, and most assuredly this is so when we come to consider the possibility of redemption. No stronger words are needed than those of the Psalmist, which we have placed at the head of this chapter. But, thanks be unto God, there is a ransom; so in the scale which pulls down the balance is "the price which covers." If the one speaks to us of the demerits of sin, and the helplessness of man, the other tells of the price of redemption paid which "covers." And lest we fail to appreciate how great was the price, we are told that it was "the price of the conflict." So much is told by this main sign, but it does not tell what was the price. Price, demerit, merit, struggle, victory, and redemption are all there, but more is needed, and for this we must turn to ponder the story as it is developed in the attendant signs.

I.—THE CROSS.

It is a striking and solemn thing to the believer to see as he turns in quest of light on this question as to the price, that here in the heavens he should be led directly from the Balance to the Cross: "A figure stationed in the darkest part of the heavens, in the very lowest part of the sphere, and outlined by the stars themselves, so as to be readily recognised by every beholder—"a figure of the shameful instrument on which the blessed Saviour died, even the cross."

The Hebrew name for this striking constellation was *Adom*, which means *cutting off*, as in Daniel ix. 26;—"After three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." The picture of the Zodiac which we are following was constructed in Northern Latitudes, and on it the Cross appears very low down to the South. This is a notable testimony to the antiquity of the Zodiac, for it is long since the Cross disappeared from the sight of the dwellers in those latitudes. "The Southern Cross was just visible in the latitude of Jerusalem at the time of the first coming of our Lord to die. Since then, through the gradual recession of the Polar Star, it has not been seen in northern latitudes. It gradually disappeared and became invisible at Jerusalem when the real sacrifice was offered there; and tradition, which preserved its memory, assured travellers that if they could go far enough south it would be again seen." In the sixteenth century of our era, voyagers, doubling the Cape for the first time, took to their northern homes the story of "a wonderful cross more glorious than all the constellations of the heavens." Night after night it shines down in Southern latitudes, never sinking out of sight, but circling the pole, and answering in unmistakable speech the question raised by the story of the Balance, What was the price? This was the price, the death on the cross, and it was paid by the Seed of the Woman, and it was the price which covers. For, said the Apostle, He *died* for us ('for' ὑπερ lit. over,). That which is over is protectingly over. So Christ died over us, *i. e.*, to cover us. The Old Testament Word *Kaphar*—cover, is the great atonement word of the Mosaic economy. Looking back upon it as a historical fact, the great Apostle said, "Ye are bought with a price," and another has written, "Ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, . . . but with precious blood." "In Egypt, and in the earliest times, the cross was the sign and symbol of life. To-day Romanists use it as the symbol of death! But

it means life! Natural life given up, and Eternal life procured."¹

Mrs. Heman in her *Cross of the South*, makes the Spanish traveller say:—

"But to thee, as thy lode stars resplendently burn
In their clear depths of blue, with devotion I turn,
Bright Cross of the South! and beholding thee shine,
Scarce regret the loved land of the olive and vine.

Thou recallest the ages when first o'er the main
My fathers unfolded the ensign of Spain,
And planted their faith in the regions that see
Its unperishing symbol thus emblazoned in thee."

II.—THE VICTIM.

The second decan pertaining to Libra carries forward the thought suggested by the Cross. Here we have an animal falling over on its back, pierced and slain by the Centaur. The Modern name of this figure is *Lupus*, a wolf, but it may be any animal. The point to notice is that it is falling over dead. The ancient Hebrew and Arabic names *Aseda*, *Asedaton*, both mean *to be slain*. The Latin name carrying forward the same idea, is *Victima*, the *Victim*. Thus we have in this second decan a slain victim. Not only was Christ crucified, but He died, and was buried, and the offering for sin was made complete. But it is of no little significance that the picture-book shows the victim as slain by the Centaur, or, to put it into speech, He is slain by Himself. Could it be possible for a picture to put that fact more intelligibly? Then when we who are Bible lovers read the story of the New Testament we find that although the Lord was "By wicked hands crucified and slain," yet it is not the less true that He "laid down His life for the sheep." That life was His own. Being the beginning of a new race, of no human father, and having lived a life on which the law of sin could lay no finger because

¹ *Witness of the Stars*, p. 49.

He was sinless, that life was His; so He could say, "No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Underneath that part of the heavenly picture we might write as its name and meaning, "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

III.—THE CROWN.

Whatever the theme of these successive chapters in the stellar revelation the ending brings us always to the great consummation. Each of the closing decans is a section which pictures the result of the actions signified by the main sign and the two following decans. This is a fact to be noted, as a part of the structural completeness of this great book. So in the Zodiac, as in historical fact, the Cross and the Victim mark the limit and farthest boundaries of the humiliation for human redemption, but thought is not suffered to remain there, from them we sweep upwards to the Crown. Scripture takes a similar course. It tells of Him who tasted death for every man, now "crowned with glory and honour," who because of His "obedience unto death, is by God highly exalted, and given a name above every name." The sign is a beautiful crescent of stars which, once seen and noted, will not be forgotten. The Hebrews called it *Atarah*, a *kingly crown*. In the East to-day the stars which compose it are called by the plural *Ataroth*. Its Arabic name is *Al Iclil*, an *ornament*, or *jewel*. So the men of olden time when they saw the sign of the Balance climb to the meridian, looked to the South and saw the Cross low down on the horizon, the Victim a short distance above it, and then, raising their eyes to the zenith, they would see the Crown glittering in the heavens, its brightest star *Al Nāir*, *Al Phecea*, the *bright one of the dish*, or *crown*, telling of the "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." The Old Testament, according to the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, told of the "sufferings of

Christ, and the glory that should follow." If this heavenly picture-book illustrates the same story, we should expect to find the humiliation and the exaltation both set before the eyes of man. Do we not find that it is so? The Cross and the Crown are both here, and as in the written revelation, so here, also, the Victim is between, and linked to both, to the first in humiliation, to the second in exaltation. The life is given as the price to cover human deficiency—nay, it is weighed against it, and the issue to him who gave Himself is the Crown, and henceforward He can say, "All authority is given unto Me in heaven and on earth." So the decans give their answer to the question, What is the price? as they severally set forth the Cross endured, the Victim slain, and the Crown bestowed. Thus this chapter adds its contribution to the reading of the story pictured in the star-gemmed sky.



CHAPTER III.

CONFLICT WITH THE POWERS OF DARKNESS.

"Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder:

The young lion and the serpent shalt thou trample under feet."

—PSALM xci. 13.

"Behold I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy."

—LUKE x. 19.

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

—ROMANS xvi. 20.

WRITERS on the science of astronomy are agreed that there is no evidence that it ever existed apart from the emblems which we are now considering, and it has been well remarked that, as they are in no way essential to it, their constant connection with it can only be explained by their having been invented at the same time, and by the same persons. There must have been some adequate object in thus associating the emblems with the stars. What was that object? "If the inventors of astronomy were indeed acquainted with truths of the utmost importance to the human race, might they not wisely desire to connect the remembrance of them with those memorials, those signs, by which they measured the path of the sun in the heavens, thus with the

observations of earthly time associating the revealed glories of eternity beyond? They whose accurate knowledge of the movement of the celestial orbs still astonishes posterity, might well desire to annex the message of everlasting mercy with which they have been entrusted to the only visible works of creation that at all times, and in all places, present the same aspect of unalterable splendour."¹

The book of Genesis is "the book of beginnings." In it is found the origin of seven important things,—earth, life, man, sin, death, Israel, and the enmity. The last is intimately connected with all the others, and so stands that permanent blessing cannot come to any until it is dealt with and removed out of the way. From first to last the Bible story is of the conflict with evil,—evil which manifests itself in active opposition to the attainment of blessing for man and the world. It tells in its earliest pages of a serpent which acts inimically to the interests of the human pair in the garden, and the progress of the story shows the continuance of that enmity. It is continually present, and here and there in the course of Bible history we are called to witness the points of actual contest between the evil and the good. It is most remarkable to notice that as the plan of God develops for man's redemption, the enmity is openly manifested to thwart it. It is seen very clearly in the efforts of the Pharaoh to slay all the male children of the Israelites; and, again, in the attempts to hinder the departure of the people from the land of bondage. It is still more clearly visible in the temptation to which the Lord was subjected by Satan, and in that dire conflict in the garden of Gethsemane. "This," said He to His enemies, "is your hour and the power of darkness." The prophetic pictures carry forward the line of conflict, and in vivid details paint the final overthrow of the enmity, by the

¹ *Mazzaroth*, pp. 22, 23.

destruction of the great enemy of man, and all his aiders and abettors.

There can be little wonder if so important a matter should find place in the heavenly picture-book, nay, rather the marvel would be if it were absent, if these emblems do at all relate to man's religious aspirations and hopes. Rising just beyond the Scales in the circle of the Zodiac is a magnificent group of stars known as the Scorpion. In Southern latitudes it is seen to perfection, rising high and remaining in sight for more than half the year,—from April to October. Many of the stellar groups have no resemblance at all to the figures which are attached to them, but the Scorpion group is sufficiently like that creature for the early astronomers to give it that name without having to stretch imagination quite so far as in some other cases. "The scorpion, as a living thing, is a spider-like insect, formed something like a small lobster, with an extended chain-like tail ending in a crooked horny sting loaded with irritant poison. To be struck by a scorpion is often fatal, though not necessarily so; but the pain from it is the intensest that can be inflicted on the human body." The picture represents this gigantic Scorpion with its tail uplifted in anger in the act of striking at the foot of the person immediately above it. The figure, its attitude, and its accompaniments, have a story to tell which is like the historical and prophetic story told in Holy Writ. In the threat made to the Serpent its final doom was declared, and at the same time the wounding of the Conqueror is foreshown.

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. iii. 15.

From first to last in the Scriptures the serpent power is associated with evil, darkness and death. That "old serpent," the devil, has the "power of

death." When Christ suffered on Calvary, it was but a brief submission to the "power of darkness." Saints are now said to be delivered from the "power of darkness," and their present conflict is against "the world-rulers of this darkness." Thus evil, death, and darkness are associated as a dire trinity at war with mankind. Is there no significance in the fact, that in the lands where it is believed these constellation figures originated, this emblem of the Scorpion is presented as the sign of darkness, and in close league with death? "In ancient Babylonia it was known as *Girtab, the Seizer and Stinger*. Sometimes it was called *Gir-anna, the serpent of heaven*, the symbolical reduplication of darkness, the monarch of winter, cold, and death alike in the earth, in the sepulchre, and in the underworld, where *Nergal, the strong one*, 'the personification of death,' reigned enthroned in awful majesty."² The traditions, perverted though they are, agree in colour and in idea with the Bible representations of facts. Even amongst the Maoris the idea of evil was associated with this group, for Antares was recognised as the Lordly star which operated powerfully against the health of men by bringing disease upon them. The Hebrew name of this sign is *Akrab*, which is the name of a scorpion, but also means *the conflict* or *war*. The Coptic name is *Isidis, the attack of the enemy*. Its brightest star, which shines with a deep red light, marks the heart of the scorpion, and is known as *Antares*. This is variously translated *the wounding, rapine, a rebel*, or it is thought to be so named because it is the "rival" of Mars (*Ares*) in reference to its colour. Its Arabic name is *Kalb al' Akrab, the heart of the enemy*. The star *Delta* marking the forehead of the creature, with *Beta* and *Pi* on either side is claimed for the Euphratean *Gis-gan-gu-sur, the Light of the Hero, or the Tree of the Garden of Light* "placed in the midst

² *Primitive Constellations*, Vol. II., p. 76.

of the abyss," and so reminding us of that other tree, the Tree of Life, "in the midst of the Garden of Eden," from which, because of the arts of the enemy and his own disobedience, man was forcibly driven. At the end of the tail are two stars close together, these are known as *Lesath, the perverse, or, the sting*. (Antares is one of the four so-called "Royal Stars," said by the Persians to have presided over the four districts into which they divided the heavens. These four stars were Antares, Aldebaran, Regulus and Tomalhaut. Tradition asserts that these marked the four colures, but this could only have been true in Antediluvian times.) Thus the figure, its name, the traditions regarding it, and the names of its prominent stars agree. But its full meaning appears when its decans are viewed with it.

I.—THE SERPENT.

Here we find two signs inextricably united,—the despair of modern astronomers. The long, scaly length of the serpent winds across the body of the serpent-holder, and he is represented as holding it fast, and struggling with it so long that he becomes bald in the contest. As in the first decan of Virgo, there is carried forward the idea of the Seed, found in the main sign, so in this decan there is carried forward in the Serpent the idea of the scorpion power. The great conflict between good and evil is not a moral contest merely. There is purpose in it, and the end is the attainment of dominion. The question is, Who is to rule in the hearts of men, and over the world? The devil has made a bold stroke for it, and all his operations are directed towards its realisation. He seeks for the everlasting possession of the "kingdom of the world." It is not then a matter for wonder that we should now see the scorpion power as the gigantic Serpent struggling to reach the Crown. Here is shown the true inwardness of the great conflict, and they who fail to note it, whether in this

picture gallery, or in the written revelation, do fail most lamentably to understand the meaning and purpose of redemption. The Hebrew name is *Alyah*, *the accursed*. The name of its brightest star which marks the neck of the Serpent, is *Unuk*, *encompassing*.

II.—OPHIUCHUS.

Whilst a little stretch of the imagination might see a serpent in the winding line of stars, it needed something more to picture a stellar man holding the snake in his powerful grasp. The originator pictured the "toiling" hero as ever holding back the serpent from reaching the symbol of dominion, and associated it with a certain group of stars, and this was sufficient for the teaching to be revived whenever the star group came into sight.

"His feet stamp Scorpio down, enormous beast
Crushing the monster's eyes and platted breast,
With outstretched arms he holds the serpent's coils;
His limbs it folds within its scaly toils;
With his right hand, its writhing tail he grasps;
Its swelling neck his left securely clasps.
The reptile rears its crested head on high,
Reaching the seven-starred crown in northern sky."

The serpent, by his subtlety, robbed the first man of the dominion held out to him, but he has now to reckon with the second man, the Lord from heaven. In vain has he tried temptation in its subtlest forms; in vain persecution and the cross. He has failed in all, and, as the prophetic Word foreshows, is yet to fail. By His obedience even unto death, Christ has become the great serpent-holder, now restraining him from the attainment of dominion, and finally will "destroy" him, treading him underfoot. The Hebrew and Arabic name of this man is *Afeichus*, which means *the serpent held*. In the head of Ophiuchus is the brightest star of the constellation, this is called *Ras al Hagus*, *the head of him who holds*. In the foot is *Saiph*, *bruised*. The foot of this wrestler, placed over the heart of the Scorpion, is

prophecy of the final issue, but the full idea conveyed has a picture to itself in the group known as Hercules.

III.—HERCULES.

This constellation occupies a large space in the heavens, and is represented in the sphere as a mighty man bending on one knee, with heel uplifted as if wounded. He has a great club in one hand, and in the other he holds a three-headed monster, and a branch with fruit upon it; his left foot is set upon the head of the great Dragon, which winds its scaly length about the ecliptic Pole. A careful look at the pictured Zodiac will show that in some important details this is a repetition of the figure of Ophiuchus. The heads of the two signs come together, and as the one is treading upon the Scorpion, so the other is treading upon the Dragon. The Egyptians called this figure *Bau*, which signifies *who cometh*. Allowing that name to stand, and accepting the evident meaning of the picture, we have a vivid illustration pointing to the Coming One, who shall destroy "the works of the devil." The Latins called this figure *Hercules*, from the Greek *Herakles*, but it is noteworthy that when Aratus wrote his poem he gives no name to this save "the Kneeler." Equally ignorant does he seem to be of what it represents. He says:—

"Near this, and like a toiling man revolves
A form. Of it no one can clearly speak,
Nor what he labours at. They call him simply
'The man upon his knees': In desperate struggle
Like one who sinks, he seems. From both his shoulders
His arms are high uplifted and outstretched
As far as he can reach; and his right foot
Is planted on the coiled Dragon's head."

Mr. Robert Brown contends that this constellation is Euphratean in origin, and was known to the Accadians as *Lugal*, and to the Babylonians as *Sarru*, both terms meaning "the King." Adopted by the Phœnicians, it became *Melqarth-Harekhal*, and in turn it was adopted by the Greeks, who made it *Herakles*.

How significant the star names in this sign. Its brightest star (in the head) is *Ras al Gethi*, the head of him who bruises. The next in order is named *Kornephorus*, and means the club-bearer. Others are, *Marsic*, the wounding, *Ma'asyn*, the sin-offering, *Caia*, punishing. Thus the names of the figure and the component stars, agree with the representation, and show him as the conqueror of the serpent, the all-powerful Redeemer and King.

These four constellations make a striking group, which is worthy of close and prolonged examination. It is a two-fold picture, reaching from far south of the Zodiacal circle to the zenith, and thence to the Pole, and in it is emphasised the great truth that the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's head. "God and truth and right and good must triumph in the end. The Ophiuchus who holds fast will not lose his crown. The scorpion may sting the heel, but the foot will crush its head. The faithful wielder of the club of righteousness may be brought to his knees, but he shall yet lift up the instrument of his power in glorious success, strangle Cerberus, and bear off in triumph the apples of gold, whilst the great Dragon writhes through all his length with his head under the heel of the Conqueror" (*Seiss*). He of whom this picture tells is He of whom it is on record that He shall be "King of kings and Lord of lords." The promised crown is safe, for He shall destroy that old serpent, whose unceasing efforts for six thousand years have been directed towards its capture. By obedience to death as the Victim, He is now exalted at God's right hand, and waits the appointed time when the rule shall be given to Him, and He shall "reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." In that day He will destroy all evil, crush the serpent's head, and open the way to the "tree of life," from which man was driven forth because he yielded to the "wiles" of the devil. May God hasten the day!

CHAPTER IV.

THE VICTORIOUS WARRIOR.

"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty one,
Thy glory and thy majesty.
And in thy majesty ride on prosperously,
Because of truth and meekness and righteousness;
And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.
Thine arrows are sharp;
The peoples fall under thee;
They are in the heart of the king's enemies."

—PSALM xlv. 3, 4.

"Midst golden stars he stands refulgent now,
And thrusts the scorpion with his bended bow."

ARATUS.

"Centaur follows with an aiming eye
His bow full-drawn and ready to let fly."

MARILIUS.

THE story of the Bible is the story of the conflict between the powers of good and evil. From first to last this is the theme of the written revelation. The plan by which the ultimate victory is to be secured to good is laid before us in history and in prophecy, and the Bible student is thus able to trace it from beginning to close, and read its past effects as earnest of the future accomplishments. The more that plan is studied the more will it compel the admiration of the reader, as therein are revealed the matchless wisdom and grace of God. That Word being our guide, we are compelled to note that the conflict is far-reaching in its scope. It is not confined to earth,

for there are indications of its presence in the heavens. There it is that the great enemy of man has his present residence, from which, in the course of the contest, he shall be ousted by the conquering hosts of heaven. But, the stage on which the great drama is being enacted is the earth, and man is the centre round which it revolves. How shall this great conflict end? The Bible is strikingly clear in its answer, and ever points to it as certain, that it is through the past and future work of the Son of God that the contest shall be won for good. Before the plan was given which showed how this should be effected, the issue was certainly known. The crushing of the serpent's head was declared, and the early preachers made known as much as was revealed to them of the manner in which it should be accomplished. It is as certain as anything can be, apart from a positive revelation, that in the days before the Flood there was a definite knowledge of the issues of the conflict which began in Paradise. In the last verse of Genesis iv. it is said, "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." The words "call upon" are translated "proclaim" in Exod. xxxiii. 19, and, with all due deference to our translators, we think that is the meaning in Genesis. The idea being that under divine illumination the men, who were cleaving to God in those days of increasing moral evil, which accompanied the advancement in science and arts which marked that period, "proclaimed" the issues of the conflict between good and evil in clear, intelligible fashion. It is true that we have no sample of their preaching in that early book, but in the New Testament a fragment has been preserved which gives the theme of the early messengers:—

"Behold the Lord came with ten thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."—Jude 14, 15.

It is from these early times that the constellation figures have come down to us, and we believe that this, the most important message that ever came to man, was by these early teachers associated with these symbolic forms. There are those who attempt to find their meaning in Grecian mythology, but it is clearly shown by investigation that the Greeks received the figures as we have them, and adapted and distorted the traditions which came with them. One of the most eminent archæologists of the present day has said regarding the present knowledge of these constellation forms and their meaning: "The fact is, very few scholars have closely studied the history of the constellations, . . . they have relied on opinions of the past, founded upon insufficient evidence and examination, and by no means up to date."

In the group of stars succeeding the Scorpion on the ecliptic, those early men pictured a centaur carrying a bow, with an arrow fitted on the string and drawn to its head ready to be discharged; this arrow is aimed directly at the heart of the Scorpion. A glance at the chart will show that this is the second centaur, and that it faces the other. Both carry weapons. That of Centaurus is aimed at the Victim, but the arrow of Sagittarius is about to find its way to the heart of the enemy.

"The Centaur's arrow ready seems to pierce
Some enemy, far forth his bow is bent
Into the blue of heaven."

KEATS.

What can this represent, if not Him of whom Enoch and the early preachers spake? Here is the same divine being with the two natures as depicted in Centaurus. There He is the despised and rejected, here He is going forth, "conquering and to conquer." There He is low down on the horizon, with the outstretched serpent between Him and the path of the sun, here He is high up with his head on the line of

the ecliptic, no longer humiliated, but exalted, with a name which is above every name, "riding prosperously."

Amongst the ancient Accadians and Babylonians this seems to have been a favourite constellation. "There are few constellations in which the figures on the monuments, and the descriptions on the tablets, show a closer connection between Euphratean and classical forms than in the case of Sagittarius," and they seem to have associated with it ideas of brightness, glory, and gladness. Its name in the ancient Accadian, *Udgudua*, is translated by Sayce "*The light of the white-face*," and by Mr. Pinches "*Smiting Sun-face*." Its Assyrian name is *Yumunahri*, "*Dawn of day*," *Dayspring*. By the Babylonians it was divided into two portions, "the dusky part," the hinder portion of the constellation, and the upper portion on and near the ecliptic was "the crown," or "glory," called sometimes *Papilsak*, "*the winged firehead*." "Cuneiform inscriptions designate Sagittarius as the *Strong One*, the *Giant King of War*, and as the *Illuminator of the great city*." Upon some of the boundary stones of Sippara (Sépharvaim of the Old Testament) Sagittarius appears sculptured in full glory.¹

By the Hebrews it was called *Kesith*, the *Archer*, the same signification being given in the Greek and Latin names. The Coptic name conveys another characteristic, *Pimaere*, the *going forth*. Here then in the figure and its names is conveyed to us the idea of a glorious Conqueror going forth. Who is this? May we not say that it is He who was the despised of men, against whom the arch-enemy plotted, but who now comes forth to destroy the evil one, and to bring joy and gladness to the oppressed sons of men, who hail Him as the "Sun of Righteousness."

Its star names are significant, *Naim*, the *Gracious*

¹ Allen, *Star Names*, p. 354.

one; *Al Shaula*, the *dart*; *Al Warida*, who comes forth; *Ruchba er rami*, the *riding of the bowman*.

Three stars in this sign were said by the Euphratean astronomers to form a "yoke," thrown across the ecliptic. The name of this yoke was *Nunki*, variously translated as "the *Lordly City*," or "the *Prince of the Earth*."

I.—LYRA.

Proceeding to study the decans of Sagittarius, we shall find that they afford some additional information regarding this victorious warrior. The first of these is the constellation *Lyra*, commonly represented as a harp hung on an eagle's neck. If from the main sign we get the idea of a glorious victory, and the circumstances show that such victory brings blessing in its train, then we may well accept the idea that those who share in the blessing will render praise as a token of their gladness. Let us turn again to the Scriptures, and there note the connection which appears between the victory and the joy that follows. In Psalm xxi. we read of the salvation which is to be accomplished in the utter overthrow of such as hate the King, and then we learn—

"For thou shalt make them turn their back;
Thou shalt make ready with thy bow-strings against the face
of them.

Be thou exalted O Lord in thy strength;
So will we sing and PRAISE thy power."

—Ver. 12, 13.

As, therefore, in the Scriptures, praise is represented as following the victory of the King, so it is here. This song of the Lamb follows as naturally as does the Song of Moses in Exod. xv. 1: "I will sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously." For this great victory the "whole creation waiteth," and when it is consummated, "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that is in them," will join in the choral

harmonies that shall proclaim the worthiness of the Lamb, — the rider on the white horse. In this constellation which rides overhead in the northern skies, but skirts the horizon in southern climes, there is a bright and beautiful star, known as Vega; "Steel-blue Vega, the zenith queen of the heavenly Lyre." As seen in a powerful telescope it is justly called "the Arc-light of the northern sky." The word means *He shall be exalted*. How fittingly is this placed as the first decan attached to the Prince of the Earth. It is called sometimes *Al Nesr, the eagle*, and its second bright star is called *Shelyuk, the eagle*, the third *Sulaphat, the springing up*—perhaps a title for the whole constellation. So as an eagle's wing shall praise ascend, for judgment meted out. This representation of the closeness of judgment and praise, the former giving cause to the latter, is a familiar feature of the Old Testament, and of the book of Revelation.

II.—ARA.

The next side-piece is ominously suggestive; it is an altar with its fire burning upon it; its peculiarity being that it is placed upside down upon the sphere, although it is said that by the ancients it was thought of and represented with flame rising northwards, and even that the Milky Way itself was the smoke and flame ascending from this altar. The flames are descending into that region unknown to the persons who originally constructed the Zodiacal constellations. In the British Museum is a broken tablet, found by Mr. George Smith in his researches in Assyria, which represents a portion of the ancient sphere. On it the names of stars, figures and numbers of certain degrees appear, and amongst them the name of the main sign, called *The Smiting Sun-face* (Sagittarius), and *Ara*, called *The Ancient Altar-below*, a name given either because of its position low down on the southern horizon, or because of its flames burning downwards.

Its position was noted by the ancients as in close proximity to the Scorpion:—

"Now 'neath the glowing sting of that huge sign
The *Scorpion*, near the south, the *Altar* hangs."

ARATUS.

Is not this the symbol of judgment? In the Scriptures, that future victory of the Son of God is associated with the destruction by fire of evildoers and evil things, "A fire goeth before Him and burneth up His enemies round about." Malachi says:—

"Behold the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."—Mal. iv. 1.

"The Greeks used the word *Ara* sometimes in the sense of praying, but more frequently in the sense of imprecation, or cursing. This is the curse pronounced against the great enemy. This is the burning fire, pointing to the completion of that curse, when he shall be cast into that 'everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" ² Its name in Arabic is *Al Mugamra, the completing, finishing*. Here is the fire awaiting the enemy, in preparation for the time when he shall be "cast down." This brings us to the third decan, where this great enemy is pictured.

III.—DRACO.

From the horizon, where is found the Ancient Altar-below, we sweep upwards towards the Northern Pole, and there see the decan which closes this chapter, and indeed this book. Here is a long and huge serpent winding in folds about the pole. Already we have seen the serpent form pictured on the sphere, and once more it is met with as we close this first volume. These serpent forms are very troublesome to our modern astronomers, "Innumerable snakes

² *Witness of the Stars*, p. 69.

twining through long and contorted areas of the heavens, where no memory can follow them." In this decan we meet with Homer's

"Scaly horror of a dragon coiled
Full in the central field, unspeakable,
With eyes oblique retorted, that ascant
Shot gleaming fire."

It is so placed on the sphere that, whatever its position as it circles the pole, it is always falling. In Southern latitudes but a small portion of this constellation is seen. Its actual stars in the heavens are by no means suggestive of the form figured on the sphere. As Mr. R. Brown points out, the figure has a "distinct religious or kosmical significance in the mind of the constellation former." No one has ever seen a dragon; yet it is a noteworthy fact that "among all nations (especially in China and Japan), and in all ages, we find it described and depicted in legend and in art. In the Holy Scriptures the dragon is represented as he "that deceiveth the whole world," who is to be "cast out." In the songs that are to be sung in the coming day of gladness is one which has for a part of its theme the Lord's victory over the dragon:

"In that day the Lord, with His sore and great and strong
sword,
Shall punish Leviathan the swift serpent,
Even Leviathan that crooked serpent;
And he shall slay the dragon³ that is in the sea."

—Isa. xxvii. 1.

As seen in the chart, the foot of Hercules is planted over the head of the dragon, a prophecy of that which shall come to pass, namely, his utter destruction, but in this picture we see him falling towards the burning pyre prepared for him. In ancient tradition it is recited how Ophion (the serpent) ruled over the world, but was overthrown by Il and Amma; a foreshadowing of

³The American Revised Old Testament does not contain the word "dragon." In this passage it translates "monster."

the victory yet to be. The brightest star in this figure is *Thuban, the subtle*; the next, in the head, is *Rastaban, the head of the subtle*. "In the Arabic it is still called *Al Waid, who is to be destroyed*." Thus its names agree with the figure, and all combine to show the nature, extent, and completeness of the victory to be accomplished by the Divine "Prince of the Earth," the "King of War" who shall cast out the Dragon and destroy him.

Thus we reach the close of the first book of this marvellous picture-teaching. In its compass we are led from the story of the woman's Seed to the final conquest when He bruises the Serpent's head. The figures, the decans and the star names agree to supply materials for the reading. So to speak, with one gigantic curve, the story sweeps from the Fall to the great Redemption, and in its course we find a vast array of details bearing on its progress, which have their fuller elucidation in the written word. Other books and chapters yet to come before us will supply further details, but meanwhile this may be contemplated as a complete section of the teachings which do, in striking pictorial fashion, "declare the glory of God."

If the several constellations are of interest in this connection, and when viewed in their groups, or chapters, are so eminently instructive, so also may we look at the "book" as a whole and find the combination wonderfully suggestive. Is there no significance in the arrangement? See, for instance, how the Scorpion lies between the two centaurs, with his claws reaching up to clutch the Balance as if to upset it, and thus turn good into evil. Above him, twice repeated in pictures which reach from the horizon to the zenith, is the story of his overthrow. The centaurs face each other, the one in humiliation, and the other exalted, and the work represented by each, although different in its action, contributes to the common object. On the one side between the Centaur and the Scorpion lies

the Victim; by its death the way is open for the destruction of the evil power depicted in the Scorpion, the Serpent and the Dragon. On the other side, between Sagittarius and the Scorpion, lies the Ancient Altar-below, betokening the doom prepared and to be meted out by the Conqueror, who once "gave Himself" but now with arrow drawn to its head in the tense bow awaits the hour to speed it to the "heart of His enemy." Let him who will, think that this arrangement is by chance, or that it had no special religious significance, I can but feel impressed with the belief that to the men of early days this record in the heavens perpetuated truths taught originally by God Himself to the world's grey fathers, and that to them night by night the heavens continually proclaimed the story of redemption,—a story inscribed with the unchanging lustrous points of light which shimmer in the firmament overhead.



BOOK II.

THE LIFE-GIVER.

*"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair.*

MILTON.

CHAPTER I.

LIFE BY DEATH.

"By the grace of God He should taste death for every man."

—HEB. ii. 9.

"The bread which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

—JOHN vi. 51.

WE shall find as we open the second book of the illustrated heavenly volume that it has its own specific theme to set forth, and that it does so as clearly and as definitely as the successive chapters of the first book have done. The first book has shown the work of the Redeemer in procuring blessing for the world by his death on the cross, and by His victory over the great enemy; this book carries forward the story and shows the blessings which come to the Redeemed.

As we turn to this second volume we take a look at its constituent figures and find that in the line of the main signs, the picture of the Goat opens the book and that of the Ram closes it. The Scripture references to these animals show them as sacrificial. The signs coming between these are connected with water, and with fishes. Indeed it is remarkable to notice the repetition of the fish forms in this section of the Zodiacal chart. Capricorn is combined with the tail of a fish; its third decan is a fish. The first decan of

Aquarius is a fish. The second main sign is a pair of fishes fastened together with a band. Cetus the third decan of Aries is a Sea monster. These forms packed within the limits of this second book and not found elsewhere are significant, and are evidently designed to teach some important lesson. What that lesson is, will appear in the exposition that follows.

Capricorn, the Goat, is pictured on the Zodiac as fallen, with his right leg bent under its body. It seems to be making a futile attempt to rise, for its left leg is out-stretched, but its drooping head shows the weakness that hinders. Yet, strange to say, the fish tail seems to be vigorous and lively. Not only are the two parts of the composite animal widely different in nature, but they differ in that one is weak and evidently dying, and the other is full of vitality. This is the figure which appears in all the Zodiacs. "The Capricorn of the Babylonian monuments is, to all intents and purposes, identical in form with the Capricorn of the modern almanacs." *Capricorn* is merely the modern Latin name and means, *Goat*. The Hebrew name is *Gēdi*, the *Goat*, or *cut off*, the same as the Arabic, *Al Gedi*. Can we find the meaning of the sign? That the goat was a sacrificial animal is of course certain, and in connection with the readings from the former pictures would be suggestive, but we will try the meaning of the star names before expressing an opinion. Five of the stars in this sign are between the third and fourth magnitudes, of these Alpha and Beta are in the horn and the head, and the remaining three in the fish tail. Beta, a telescopically multiple star is known as *Dabih*. Miss Rolleston gives as the meaning of this, *the sacrifice slain*. Modern astronomical authority is in close agreement with this, translating it, *The slaughterer*, and asserts that it manifestly refers "to the sacrifice celebrated by the heathen Arabs at the heliacal rising of Capricorn." We think it has another and more important reference. Gamma is *Sa'ad al Naschira*, *the record of the cutting*

off. Allen translates it as *The Bringer of Good Tidings*. Delta is *Denab Algedi*, *the sacrifice cometh*.

There is no effort of the imagination required to draw the conclusion. The form of the dying goat, with the star names which belong to the figure, show the symbol of sacrificial death. But of whom, and on whose behalf?

If we follow the analogy taught by the first book we are to trace through the volume the Person of the Redeemer, and every sign will put Him before us in one of His many aspects. "The first chapter in each book has for its great subject the Person of the Redeemer in prophecy and promise. The last chapter in each book has for its subject the fulfilment of that prophecy in victory and triumph; while the two central chapters in each book are occupied with the work which is the accomplishment of the promise, presented in two aspects—the former connected with grace, the latter with conflict."¹ In the first book the fact appears that by means of death the Seed of the Woman should become the Victor over the enemy; here His action on behalf of others is shown as the coming sacrifice, in which "He makes His soul an offering for sin."

But what shall be said of the vigorous tail of the fish which forms one body with this dying goat? It has been suggested that thus it is shown that it is by means of death that He imparts life; "That picture which has no parallel in nature, has a perfectly true counterpart in grace." The first thought which is naturally connected with this picture is, that it is the same Person who dies, and lives again, and that He enters upon a vigorous life of a new order. The death is sacrificial, but it is evident that the sacrifice comes to possess a life after death.

If the death is sacrificial, then it is on behalf of others and they share in the benefits it secures. But

¹ *Witness of the Stars*, p. 77.

who are they? By one writer on this subject it is the church, and by another, the saved, but we submit, that no such limit can be legitimately drawn; we would rather say that to those who read these star pictures in ancient days, the general prophetic truth was put that by means of death life should be secured for the race. With the New Testament before us, we may say that the pictorial representation agrees with the Scripture in declaring a profound and significant universal provision for human redemption, as expressed in the Saviour's language, "The bread which I will give is my flesh, *which I will give for the life of the world.*"

So it may be accepted that here the Redeemer is prophetically pictured in that wonderful sacrificial aspect by which He "bore away the sin of the world,"—the *one* all-pervading universal sin. This indeed is the good tidings He has made known. The decans aid with their contribution to this view of the main sign.

I.—SAGITTA.

Sagitta, or *The Arrow*, is a small constellation, but it is a most interesting one. It possesses five stars of the fourth magnitude, and is, therefore, not very conspicuous, but it is a very ancient constellation, and is mentioned three times by Aratus in his poem. Its peculiarity is, that it is naked and alone; it is an arrow shot from an invisible bow, by an unseen archer. "It was not shot by Sagittarius the Archer; so much is quite clear for it is flying high above his head, and in the opposite direction to which he is shooting. This is the explanation of the phrase:—

"Another Arrow cast
Without a bow."

Nor can either of the three heroes who are near at hand, the Herdsman, the Serpent-Holder, or the

Kneeler, have dispatched it. The Herdsman grips his crook, the Serpent-Holder has both hands full of the twining snake, and the hands of Hercules are occupied."² Must not this arrow, speeding from an invisible archer, be read with the picture of the dying Goat? Isaiah with prophetic sight looked to the suffering Servant and said of Him, "We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted," and the Psalmist, constructing his prophetic odes, puts into the mouth of that suffering one the words:—

"Thine arrows stick fast in me
And thy hand presseth me sore."

—Psa. xxxviii. 2.

The death penalty threatened when man sinned in Paradise was not inflicted, and the sinning pair were spared to continue and to beget offspring under new conditions, but the sacrifice of the animals by means of which they were clothed, showed that the forfeited life was spared only because of the grace which provided and accepted the substitution of another life, that of "the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world"; who said, "Lo, I come, to do Thy will O God"; who "gave His life a ransom for many." The arrow speeds its way to the heart of the Redeemer, and as a sacrifice He died. The Hebrew name of this sign is Hēs or Hêts, *an arrow*.

II.—AQUILA.

The second decan, *Aquila*, or the *Eagle*, adds to the clearness of the story told in this first chapter of the second book. It is the picture of an eagle, a royal bird, falling pierced, and wounded, in a rapid death-descent. It follows naturally after the picture of an

² *Astronomy without a Telescope*, p. 76.

arrow. If the Lord is represented as saying, "thine arrows stick fast in Me," He further says:—

"My heart throbbed, my strength faileth me;
As for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me."

—Psa. xxxviii. 10.

A wounded eagle; how fit a representation of Him who was "rich," yet for our sakes became poor, who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, and who treads the path of humiliation until He becomes "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Ascending to the meridian, and on the border of the Milky Way, may be seen at the commencement of September, about 9 p.m., the three stars in a line which are the most prominent in this sign. The brightest star in the centre is *Altair the wounding*. This marks the neck of the eagle. "The star β in the throat is called *Al Shain, the bright*, from a Hebrew root meaning *scarlet coloured* (as in Joshua ii. 18). The star Gamma in the back is called *Tarared wounded*, or *torn*,³ in the lower wing is one named *Alcair* which means *the piercing*, and, Eta in the tail, *Al Okal* has the significant meaning *wounded in the heel*."⁴

III.—DELPHINUS.

The third decan consists of a cluster of little stars,— "a pretty little cluster, which once picked out, can never be forgotten, its leading stars being so nearly equal in magnitude, and so close together." It is a figure full of life, and is placed as if pushing its way upwards. The head of the wounded Eagle is downwards, but that of the Dolphin is towards

³ The form of this name most familiar to modern readers is the Persian Tarazed. The Persians called the whole figure "*Shahin tara zed*, the Star-striking Falcon"—Allen, *Star Names*, p. 57.

⁴ *Witness of the Stars*, p. 81.

the pole. The sacrificial animal, the arrow of death, and the falling eagle, these tell the story of the life given and taken; what can this be but the divine completion to the story,—the resurrection from the dead? That is according to the divine order; first the death of the Sacrifice, and then the resurrection to the "indissoluble life." The figure of the vigorous up-springing fish shows the transition to a new life, a life of another order. Over Him, all "thy waves and billows have gone" (Psa. xlii. 7), but "He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever" (Psa. xxi. 4). Its ancient name, is *Dalaph*, in Hebrew, and is said to signify the *pouring out of water*, and in Arabic, *coming quickly*.

Of this main sign and its decans, Dr. Seiss eloquently says:—"Yes, this strange goat fish, dying in its head, but living in its after-part—falling as an eagle pierced and wounded by the arrow of death, but springing up from the dark waves with the matchless vigour and beauty of the dolphin, sinking under sin's condemnation, but rising again as sin's conqueror—developing new life out of death, . . . was framed by no blind chance of man. The story which it tells is the old, old story on which hangs the only availing hope that ever came, or ever can come, to Adam's race. To what it signifies we are for ever shut up as the only saving faith. In that dying Seed of the woman we must see our Sinbearer, and the atonement for our guilt, or die ourselves unpardoned and unsanctified. Through His death and blood-shedding we must find our life, or the true life, which alone is life, we can never have.

"The wheaten corn which falls and dies,
In autumn's plenty richly waves:
So, from the loathsome place of graves,
With Christ, our Elder we may rise."

"From death comes life! The hand of God
This direst curse to good transforms;
So purest air is born of storms;
So bursts the harvest from the clod."⁴

Thus, this first chapter gives a consistent group of pictures, showing in striking symbolism the nature of the hope made known to, and cherished by the men of ancient days. They inherited mortality from our first parents, with its attendant ills, but there was gleaming before them the hope of the bruising of the serpent's head. That hope meant the reversal somehow of their heritage of death, and if we have rightly read this star sign, then they were taught to look for such reversal through the death of One as a sacrifice, by whose "offering once for all" there should be life from the dead. The history of Jesu's work as given in the New Testament, makes this abundantly clear to us, but this cannot lessen our sense of that grace which had so made known the great fact to early men, that they were able to enshrine the teaching in the star-gemmed sky in memory-figures which, spite of the perverting encrustation of tradition, do so easily yield their original meaning to patient investigation.

⁴ *The Gospel in the Stars*, pp. 187, 188.

CHAPTER II.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

*'Rolls from Aquarius' vase a limpid stream
Where numerous stars like sparkling bubbles gleam.'*

ARATUS.

*"The fountain flows! It pours in fullest measure
Of grace and power—a great and plenteous flood!
Drink—drink, O man! Drink in the crystal treasure,
Nor thirst, nor die, but live the life of God."*

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

—JOHN vii. 37.

IT has been shown that the first group of signs in the second book of this heavenly portfolio manifests with unmistakable clearness the great fact that the Redeemer would give His life a ransom for many. The main sign with its decans showed the life given, and the life procured. But if that fact stood alone it would appear as a marvel without any corresponding results beyond the personal act of the Redeemer, and His personal reward. It is a complete picture so far as it relates to Him but it needs supplementing by others to see the results accomplished. So that group of pictures prepares for what are to follow. No sooner do we compare this second group than we are compelled to see its agreement with the first. If in the Dolphin we are shown the up-springing vigorous life succeeding to the death clearly pictured in the other signs, what more appropriate now than

that we should be invited to view the bestowment of that new life upon others? Look at the main characteristic of this group opening with Aquarius. It is full of life and motion. Vitality is in every line of it. The preceding group in the drooping head of the Goat, the speeding Arrow, and the falling Eagle manifest the failing powers attendant upon the approach of death. Life succeeding to death is indicated by the vigorous tail of the fish, and the lively dolphin. That vitality is carried forward and markedly appears in every constellation in this group.

Here is a man who appears to be in the act of running swiftly, his left hand uplifted. He holds on his right arm an urn from which proceeds, as from an inexhaustible reservoir, a stream which bends Eastwards and Westwards, and which enlarges as it flows. Beneath his feet is a fish swimming forwards to meet the stream which it drinks, taking it all. Immediately above the Water-bearer is the fore-part of a winged horse, its legs stretched forth as at full gallop, and its wings expanded to aid its rapid course. Higher yet, and midway to the pole is a Swan, a bird of land and water, speeding its way in rapid flight through the heavens. A casual glance shows this expression of life and movement, and will cause the student to conclude that it was the intention of the designer of these constellation forms to express thereby some governing idea. What that is may be found by considering the signs individually, and in their order.

AQUARIUS is a straggling and not a very conspicuous constellation, as it does not contain any very brilliant stars. It lies a little to the right of Capricorn and at about 9-0 p.m. at the beginning of October it is on the meridian, and may be seen by dwellers in the south, a little to the north of the zenith. From time immemorial it has been represented in the form appearing on the chart. Modern Arabs,—who being Moslems are forbidden to picture the human figure—have represented this sign under the form of a mule

bearing two water-skins.¹ As this man speeds along the ecliptic he pours from his urn an ever-flowing stream. There are two streams pictured on the Zodiac, one of life and one of judgment. This is the issuing stream of life poured forth by Him who has won the right to give it unto the sons of men. It is the antediluvian picture of the Giver and the gift, and history in its slow and steady march has realized the pictured prophecy. It is an old-time picture of the water of life for which man is thirsting, and of the Redeemer who gave Himself, who pours forth the stream of life. The written revelation shows that He has made the picture a glorious fact. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." How significant this picture becomes to us as we listen to that conversation with the Samaritan woman. "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Yes, this is the blessed truth set forth in this sign. The life procured by death is available for the sons of men. Because of that life given, we now live, and because of it the way is open to the possession of Eternal Life. Blessed truth! "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

In the Scriptures other divine gifts are pictured under the figure of water poured out, and their freeness, abundance and satisfying qualities are associated with the figure. Great physical changes which are to come are associated with the bestowment of water. There shall be "rivers opened in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys." "In the

¹ Images of human form are prohibited by the Koran. In the oral utterances attributed by tradition to the prophet is this anathema, "Woe unto him who paints the likeness of a living thing: on the day of judgment those whom he has depicted will rise up out of the grave and ask him for their souls. Then, verily, unable to make the work of his hands live, will he be consumed in everlasting flames."—Allen, p. 33.

wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." The gift of the Holy Spirit is put forth under this striking figure:—

"Fear not, O Jacob my servant;
And thou Jeshurun whom I have chosen,
For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty,
And streams upon the dry ground:
I will pour my spirit upon thy seed,
And my blessing upon thine offspring."

—Isa. xliv. 2, 3.

Without excluding the idea of the manifestations of these divine blessings, I think that the setting of this sign in such close connection with the preceding sign of death, has for its main signification the bestowment of life.

Its name in Hebrew is *Deli, the water-urn*; in Akkadian *Ku-ur-ku, the Seat of the Flowing Waters*. The principal stars emphasise the good fortune that accompanies this gift, and becomes the possession of the recipient. *Saad al Melik, The Fortunate one of the King. Saad al Su ud, Luckiest of the Lucky. Al Saad al Bula, the Good Fortune of the Swallower*. He who gives bestows good, and he who receives is blest indeed. Now we examine its decans:—

I.—PISCIS AUSTRALIS.

Here is a fish, low down on the chart, and represented as swimming forward to meet the stream which flows towards it, and it drinks it all. It is a constellation something like a kite in appearance with a bright star at its apex. This star is known as *Fomalhaut, the mouth of the fish*. If in the main sign we have the Giver and the gift no less clearly are we shown in this sign the gift, the recipient, and the vigour it receives. If these things are vividly portrayed it is also certain, the picture being our guide, there will be no failure in communication or reception. It is customary to pass very lightly over the consideration of the state and degree of revelation made known

in ancient days and to flatter ourselves with the superiority of our light and knowledge as compared with the dense darkness which then prevailed. We may thank God for the greater light and knowledge which in the order of divine providence have come to us, but we need not therefore disparage the light of early men, or imagine that they had none. Nor should we brush aside as unworthy of thought the mode which they selected to perpetuate the solemn truths which they understood, concerning their own danger and helplessness, and the grace of God which should meet their deepest need. If these matters pictured as we conceive them here were known to the fathers of the race, who "thought upon His word," what deep delight would fill their minds as they sought out the familiar stars which had been associated with these profound truths,—and, once associated, how indelible the pictures, and how inseparable the doctrine.

II.—PEGASUS.

The second decan is the figure of a great horse, pushing forward at full speed, with great wings springing from his shoulders. This is a very noteworthy constellation, its great square of stars being easily recognizable, as it slowly swings across the heavens. Its name is Pegasus, chief horse. The Greeks called it *πηνεισος*, or *horse of the fountain*. *Sus* means "not only a horse, but *swiftly coming or returning*, with the idea of joy-bringing." —*Seiss*. There is a long list of names for rather inconspicuous stars; this shows unusual early interest in the constellation. It is noteworthy, too, that as in the main sign, so in this, several of these names contain the word *Saad, Good Fortune*, showing that the one idea of benefit is consistently carried forward. Its brightest star is *Markab*, the Arabic for saddle, but translated by Miss Rolleston as *returning from*; the next *Scheat*, probably from *Saad, Fortunate*, and *Enif, the branch*.

It seems from the figure and the star-names that the blessings of good represented in the stream poured forth are quickly to be brought, and the figure suggests that "He that shall come will come and will not tarry." The men of antediluvian days who feared the Lord looked for this advent, and as surely as they associated judgment with that manifestation, so also did they associate life. Observe how strikingly this speedy advent is pictured in the last decan.

III.—CYGNUS.

The chart gives it as the figure of a mighty bird sweeping through mid-heaven, "up-poised on gleaming wings." It is not certain that the original figure was a Swan, but it was certainly a gigantic bird. In all modern languages, however, it is the Swan, and as that is a bird linked to air, earth, and water, it fittingly symbolises the universality of the blessings to be brought. The figure may be easily traced in the heavens. "A long undulating line of bright stars lies parallel to the axis of the Milky Way, nearing the western edge of the great channel which here divides it. This represents the outstretched neck, body and tail of the flying swan. Crossing it at right angles is another undulating line of stars, which represents the outstretched wings of the flying bird. The whole constellation has often been termed, from its shape, the "Northern Cross."

Down the broad galactic river,
Where the star-beams dance and quiver,
Flies the Swan with grace transcendent,
Bearing on its wing resplendent
Sacred cross of death and glory,
Emblem of redemption's story.

Observers speak of this constellation with enthusiasm. "Its low-power fields are overpowering in magnificence," "an astonishing profusion of magnificence." "Its Hebrew name is *Azel, who goes and returns*. In the Denderah Zodiac it is named *Tes-ark, this*

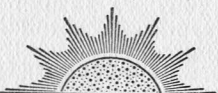
from afar." How different its attitude from the asterism which lies near it. The Eagle is falling dead, but this is represented as in full flight through the heavens. It comes from afar, and it is winging its flight downwards. Its brightest star is *Deneb*, which means *the judge*; the next in brightness is in the beak of the bird, and is called *Al Bireo, flying quickly*, a name which is said by Ideler to have originated from a misunderstanding of the words *ab ireo* in the description of the constellation in the 1515 *Almagest*. If so, it may be pointed out that the name is in remarkable agreement with the attitude of the figure, and Ideler may be wrong. This star is "one of the loveliest double stars in the entire heavens, the principal star of the third magnitude being topaz yellow, and the companion of the seventh magnitude sapphire blue." The star γ in the body is named *Sadr, who returns*, as in a circle. Thus this bird in its lordly flight across the heavens is gracefully bearing aloft the cross over the nations, that cross by which life is brought to the perishing, and He who died upon it will quickly return to give to such as trust in Him that water of life which will spring up within them a well of everlasting life.—

"Yonder goes Cygnus, the Swan, flying Southward,
Sign of the Cross and of Christ unto me."

"Beautiful picture of most precious gospel truths! a picture which I can interpret no otherwise than as intended by men fully informed beforehand of these glorious facts. And if, perchance, these constellations were not meant in token, testimony, and prophecy of what is foreknown, believed and expected by the primeval patriarchs who arranged them, the picture is still true to what has since come to pass, and which is part of our holy religion to accept and rejoice in as the great mercy of God to a fallen world."² As we turn

² *Gospel in the Stars*, p. 208.

to the Bible story we read the familiar record of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and of the life which He purchased by His death, and which became the boon to the perishing sons of men. We hear His voice ringing down the dark ages, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Life! Life!—this is the great gift of the gospel, and it has been given to all the race in the sparing of Adam, and by the Offering once for all. And to all who will accept the Lordship of the Second Man, that life shall be unending, immortal. He who procured this last and greatest gift is speedily coming to bestow it. "Whosoever will," "He that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely."



CHAPTER III.

LIFE AND DOMINION.

*"To ask or search I blame thee not; for heaven
Is as the Book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read His wondrous works."*

MILTON.

"I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."

—JOHN X. 10.

THIS chapter in its group of constellations carries forward pictorially the story set before us in the preceding sections of this second book. Hitherto, the pictures have shown the procuring, and the bestowing of the main blessing secured to men by the Redeemer. Strong emphasis is put upon the provision for, and the gift of life to, men. It is highly instructive to notice how closely this presentation agrees with the Bible story. The written revelation and the pictorial representation agree in thus setting before us the need for life to man, and the gracious purpose of God in the provision of the Seed who, by the sacrifice of Himself, has obtained the right to bestow the gracious boon upon our mortal race. If as we turn to the Gospel according to John, we are compelled to see how prominent is the "life" phase of Christ's work in that narrative, it is no less certain that in this section of the heavenly picture-book the same idea is asserted

and repeated in unmistakable imagery. If, as already pointed out, the first chapter of this second book shows the gift of life to procure life, and the second shows the bestowment of that life, then most assuredly does this chapter put before us the life in vigorous manifestation. Let not my readers here mistake, and imagine that it is intended that Eternal life is here to be viewed in possession, and in manifestation. Rather let us understand that here is pictured the truth, lost sight of by orthodoxy, and a-wanting in modern theories of the Atonement, that the life *now* enjoyed by man is in possession because it has been purchased by the work of Christ. The life that was in Adam's possession was forfeited by his sin, and yet spared because of the life to be given by the Coming Seed. It is upon the basis of that fact that the Gospel now asks for allegiance to Christ, and proffers Eternal Life to the believer in Him.

Let us now note what may be the nature of the contribution which this constellation and its decans offer to the teaching. Here are two fishes, vigorously swimming, one along the line of the ecliptic towards the Waterpurer, and the other shooting upwards to the Pole. But, the picture being our guide, they are held in by the band or ribbon, which, fastened to the tail of each, binds them to the Sea Monster. Carrying forward the idea of bondage here suggested, we next see a woman who is chained to the sky; fetters on her wrists and ankles, showing how complete appears to be her captivity. The last figure of the four is that of a man whose official position is clearly indicated by the crown he wears, and the sceptre he holds in his right hand. Such are the pictures, what are they intended to convey?

PISCES is a somewhat barren constellation, formed by two lines of faint stars, and possessing no conspicuous star. One of these lines lies parallel with the upper side of the square of Pegasus, and the other runs down its right side. The first point of Aries is

in this constellation.¹ This point is slowly but steadily moving on the ecliptic. Two thousand years ago it was in the Ram, hence its name,—First point of Aries. It is now in Pisces, but retains its old name. In reading astronomical books it must be borne in mind that because of this procession of the equinoxes, as it is called, the signs Aries, Taurus, etc., no longer correspond with the constellations of the same name.

A careful look at this picture would certainly give the idea that the framer must have intended to convey some special idea. The fishes swimming in different directions, yet held in by the band which is fastened to the neck of a creature also connected with the waters; the band is also held by the Ram, the main sign in the next group. Such manifest intention to link these four signs together should lead us to expect that it had some object other than the mere fancy of the designer. If we abide by the interpretation given of the Southern fish we shall see in these two fishes the recipients of the gift of life. Expositors of these heavenly signs agree in this, but confuse the simplicity of the picture by supposing that the fish are intended to represent one or both of the elective bodies revealed in the Scriptures,—the nation of Israel and the Church. So far as we can understand, the Gospel in its primitive presentation, the hope of salvation, was put before men in very simple form. By the fall two things had been forfeited, the life of man, and the dominion which turned upon his obedience. The Gospel message which appealed to him dealt with these two items, and was designed to show how they should be regained. The written revelation makes this clear, but it also shows the outworkings of the purpose in history, and on the historical base provided it rears the prophecy

¹ The First Point of Aries is the station in the heavens whence are reckoned Right Ascensions on the equator and longitudes on the Ecliptic. It is one of the places where the sun in his annual journey crosses the equator, the place and time of the Vernal Equinox (Autumnal, in the Southern Hemisphere).

which points to the exact and detailed manner of fulfilment. The plan, as given in the Word, required the preparation of a nation, but it is to go beyond that written word to suppose that the nation was revealed before the days of Abraham. Dr. Seiss supposes that one of the fishes shows the "Christian Church organised under the institutes of Jesus Christ." We dare not say that neither of these bodies is intended, but we do say that we think it unwise to attempt to read into the Gospel of the antediluvian days that which was then a secret with God, and which was not revealed through His servants and enshrined in a written word till centuries afterwards. I incline to the view that we are here to see the hopes set before early men. To them was revealed the initial blessing from the universal work of the Redeemer, and they were taught to seek for the two things which are the main themes of God's gracious provision for man, the Life and the Kingdom. Christ has come to give men life. This He has done, but man, thus far benefited, may have that same blessing increased. Not only "life" but abundant life is available. So one of the fish is seen as if it would swim nearer to the Waterpurer, and obtain from the urn, at its very source, the water of life. The other fish is vigorously swimming upwards to where the crowned Cepheus waves the sceptre of dominion. In these two things the hopes of men are centred, and whether the interpretation of this sign be true or not, those two items, Life, and Dominion,—remain as from earliest days the only things which can meet and satisfy human needs, and, may we add, these are the two things which God provides. We learn from Heb. xi. that Abraham and his descendants looked for a better country, that is, a heavenly. This hope did not necessarily originate with them. Their view of the future took a clearer shape than may have been possible to the men of the former dispensations, but surely such as Abel, Enoch, and Noah, had sight of the blessings to come, and when they went

forth and proclaimed the name of the Lord, there was in the message some testimony to the manner in which God would bless obedient mankind. Is there not also a further hint? The issues of the work of Christ, if considered under the limited aspect of the present workings of the Gospel, are apparently very meagre. But the issues as portrayed in prophecy are great and manifold. The outlook is upon a world-wide salvation, of which the lost are few as compared with the multitudes of the redeemed. If the native element of the fish is water, its characteristic is multiplicity. When the aged patriarch would bless the sons of Joseph, his prayer for them was, "Let them increase as fishes do increase" (Gen. xlviii. 16, margin). As pictured here the issues of the Redeemer's work are foreshown, and the symbol of multiplicity fittingly points to the glorious results. When our Saviour said to the apostles that He would make them "fishers of men," it is to put a very limiting idea to it to suppose that they were to fish with rod and line, and get their catches singly. Rather they should gather till "the net was full." The work they did has its place, as also has the present ministry, but we should look forward to the time yet to be when they shall carry out their work, and the Lord shall "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." On the Denderah Zodiac the sign is named *Picot Orion, or Pisces Hori, the fishes of Him that cometh*. The Hebrew name is *Dagim, fishes*, connected with multitudes as in the passage cited above. Star names in the sign are *Okda, the knot, or the united*, and *Al Samaca, the upheld*.

I.—THE BAND.

The first decan is a long, waving ribbon or band. "By this band these two fishes are inseparably tied together, so that the one cannot get on without the other." Aratus says:—

"Though far apart, a diamond studded chain,
Clasping their silver tails, unites the twain."

Its Arabic name is *Al Risha, the band or bridle*. The band is carried down and attached to the neck of *Cetus, the Sea Monster*, as if suggesting that the progress of the fishes towards the attainment of their aspirations is hindered by the bulky monster. And so it is, whatever may be the hopes man may cherish under divine encouragement, it yet remains true that he is in bondage; and this decan seems to set forth that truth. Paul sets before us in Romans the teaching that the whole creation is in "the bondage of corruption," and that even saints "groan," waiting for "the redemption of our body." It was one great part of the work of Christ on the Cross that He should taste death for every man, that "He might deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage," and "when he ascended on high He led captivity captive." In the light of that last quotation, it is significant to notice that the Ram has his foreleg outstretched over the Band as if he held control, and but bides his time when he will loosen the band and set the captives free. Man is in bondage to sin, to death, and corruption, and the Redeemer has come to effect deliverance. He will "deliver from this present evil age," and has died that He might "deliver all them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Such as have accepted the Lordship of Christ are no longer "led captive by the devil at his will," but the chains are not all actually removed. But when the Author and Prince of life returns, then shall the bondage of corruption be finally taken away, by the redemption of our body. Forbid it that we should return to the bondage of the "beggarly rudiments" whence we have been rescued by the grace of God.

II.—ANDROMEDA.

The next decan puts before us a peculiar picture. It is that of a woman with fettered feet and arms, bound in helplessness to the sky. The constellation is one

of the largest and most important in the Northern Hemisphere, but it never rises very high in Southern latitudes. Its name *Andromeda* is Greek, and signifies *man-ruler*. In the Denderah Zodiac it is called *Set, set up, set up as a Queen*. She is chained, and the names of the stars agree with the picture. Alpha is *Al Phiratz, the broken down*; Beta is *Mirach, the weak*. The Arabic word signifies a girdle. This is worn for support, and thus the word closely agrees with the meaning here given, drawn from the Hebrew root. Gamma is *Al Maach, struck down*. That is a picture which carries forward the idea given in the band, and shows in concrete form the bondage from which deliverance is sought. How this must appeal to those who have realised the power of sin and death, and their own helplessness. Said Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Who? The next decan makes answer.

III.—CEPHEUS.

Here is the figure of a king, wearing a royal robe, having a crown on his head, and holding in his right hand the sceptre of dominion. Is not this the answer to the question, Who shall deliver? May we not say with Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He who sits with one foot on the solstitial colure, and the other on the pole-star, fittingly represents him who is at the right hand of the Majesty on High, angels, authorities, and powers being made subject to Him, and who shall presently

"Take the righteous sceptre,
Claim and wear the holy crown,"

bring deliverance to them that are bound, and set the captives free. The name *Cepheus*, a title given by all early astronomers to this figure, and compared by Brown to *Khufer* of Great Pyramid fame, is from a Hebrew root, signifying *the branch*, among the Arabians he has been known as, *Al Aghnan, the sheep*,

the earlier idea being that of a shepherd and his flock. Thus giving the thought so often presented in the Scriptures of the care and protection to be given by this personage to those who are rescued from bondage. On the right shoulder is a star known as *Al Deramin*, coming quickly. In the girdle is another called *Al Phirk*, the redeemer, in Arabic *the flock*. In the left knee is *Al rai*, or *Errai*, who bruises or breaks, in Arabic *the shepherd*. The Egyptians called this constellation *Pe-ku-hor*, the Ruler that cometh. The mere reading of these names should suffice to show the interpretation and its harmony with, and completion of, the thoughts suggested by the other members of the group. Cepheus is the king who shall deliver from the thralldom of the enemy, and he is also the shepherd who shall guide the great multitude "which no man can number" unto "fountains of waters of life." The Ruler, Deliverer, Prince of Life, is here before us, and the picture is a fitting and happy close to a set of representations given in the chapter.

Man redeemed by the death of the Redeemer has before him the two blessings, the Life and the Kingdom. From the opening of the history of fallen man to the close as depicted in the page of Holy Writ, these are the comprehensive provisions of God, and, apart from their realisation, there is, there can be, no hope of blessing for man. They are linked together, the Life for the Kingdom, and the Kingdom to crown the Life. He who dies as the Sacrifice is He who provides redemption. They who share in the life, and will seek further blessing through Him, have before them the glories of the Kingdom. As we look now over the four signs thus considered, may we not say that the double truth is clearly suggested by the double sign? The one fish swims towards the Water-pourer as if for fresh draughts of life, and the other towards the Pole where sits in royal magnificence the King, who is both Deliverer and Shepherd.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVER-LIVING CONQUEROR.

*"First Aries, glorious in his golden wool,
Looks back and wonders at the mighty Bull."*

MANILIUS.

*"The Lamb enthroned that has been slain
He comes again o'er all to reign."*

*"Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches,
and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing."*

—REV. V. 12.

THIS is the last chapter of the second book of the heavenly volume, and ere we try to read it, it may be well to call attention to the arrangement which the chapters in each book seem to follow. Careful comparison will show that the opening chapter in each division gives promise or prophecy connected with the main theme pictured in the book. The second chapter gives the gracious results flowing from the work promised and inaugurated. The third shows the results of the work enjoyed, but conflict attends it; and the last chapter puts the triumphant issue, when all hindrances to the full realisation of the work done are removed by the Redeemer in His glorious power.

In this book, as an instance, the first chapter puts before its readers the promise of the redemption to be effected, and the manner of it is clearly shown. The second chapter shows the gracious results, in the gift of life bestowed. Chapter three shows the efforts to enjoy the full fruition of the blessings of redemption

hindered by the influence of the enemy, and the last chapter, which now opens before us, gives the triumphant deliverance from the power of the enemy. The theme in each book, whilst belonging to one perfect plan, differs, but the structure of each is identical, showing in the successive chapters—promise, grace, conflict, triumph. A glance at the figures which belong to this chapter will give some idea of the matter and course of its teaching.

Here we find as the first picture, a Ram lying at rest on the ecliptic, over the head of the Sea Monster. His right leg is folded under him; his left is outstretched and holds the Band. He is looking backwards upon the charge of the mighty Bull. The first decan lies to the North, and represents a woman seated in a chair, engaged in the act of adorning herself, "making herself ready." The second decan is the huge Sea Monster, to whose neck is affixed the Band which holds the Fishes. The last representation is the picture of a triumphant swordsman, who, with winged feet, is speeding his way, bearing with him the head of the gigantic enemy he has overthrown. These pictures indicate a chapter full of interest, with direct reference to the themes hitherto presented.

The Ram reminds us strongly of the opening figure of this book. That was the Goat, with the drooping head, dying in sacrifice, and its decans agree with that representation. Here is the Ram, or Lamb, possessing abundant life and vigour. Both are animals of sacrifice, and both as such have the closest possible relation to the purpose and bestowment of life taught in the Scriptures. Their positions—one at the beginning and the other at the end of the book—suggest that in the order the death of the sacrifice is followed by its triumphant possession of life in full vigour. More: the death of the first was to be a benefit to the many, but the full enjoyment of that benefit is hindered. What more fitting than that we should now see the Ram in full vigour, as the Lamb that

was slain, but now liveth, so acting that the enemy shall be triumphed over, that the blessings purchased should be fully enjoyed?

If this is to assume too much, it may be easily supported by a look at the names of this figure and its component stars. Its Hebrew name, *Taleh*, and the Syriac *Amroo*, signify *The Lamb*. In Arabic the name is *Al Hamal*, the *sheep*, the *gentle*, the *merciful*. "The ancient Accadian name was *Bara-ziggar*; *Bar* means *altar* or *sacrifice*, and *ziggar* means *right making*, so that the full name would be 'the sacrifice of righteousness.' The names of its principal stars point to a former death. Alpha is *Hamal*, the *sheep*, or *El Nath*, or *Natik*, the *wounded*, *slain*; cuneiform inscriptions have been found naming it *Dil-gan*, the *Messenger of Light*. Beta is *Al Sheratan*, the *bruised*, the *wounded*; and Gamma is *Mesartim*, the *bound*." Surely this is a representation of "the Lamb of God who beareth away the sin of the world," He who said, "I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore."

From 2540 years ago "the Ram opened the year, and led the starry flock as their bellwether." It was on the 14th of the Jewish month Nisan that the sun entered Aries, and it was then that the passover lamb had to be slain. "By the time of the coming of Him whom the passover typified, it had receded to the spot where is still to be found the star named *El Nath*, or *Natik*. . . . The emblem and the names, existing before what they indicate took place, were prophetic, and are among the many proofs that God is, and hath spoken. He commanded Moses so to fix the ordinance of the Passover, that during the darkness of the crucifixion the star so named should be close to the sun and the whole of the constellation Aries. He who cometh would appear around it. Man could not arrange this coincidence—man could not predict it, but God by Moses prefigured it; the lamb was yearly slain for 1500 years, when the sun was among

these stars, but the Equinox had not receded thither; seasons, months, and years may vary, but the Solstice and the Equinox never; different stars are behind the sun at those moments at the lapse of centuries, but man cannot mistake the day when the shadows no longer lengthen, but begin to contract, nor that when day and night are equal."¹ It may be said that it was blind chance that found the sun in this position, but with another writer we say, "it is easier to believe that it was design. It makes a smaller demand upon our faith." Having reached the conclusion that here is pictured the Lamb that was slain, but now liveth, we proceed to inquire concerning the testimony borne by the decans.

I.—CASSIOPEIA.

This constellation is in a part of the heavens not seen in New Zealand latitudes. It is described in astronomical works as containing "a multitude of galaxy-fields." It is stated that in November, 1572, there appeared a star in this constellation which rivalled Venus in its brightness, and was visible at noonday. It faded away during sixteen months to utter extinction. It is said that its appearance incited Tycho to compile his star-catalogue. It created great excitement at the time and induced Beza's prediction of the second coming of Christ, as it was considered a re-appearance of the star of Bethlehem.² However interesting to astronomical observers this constellation is, or may have been, it is of far more import to us as a sign in the great picture book of the heavens. How striking the difference between this woman, and that of the last chapter.

Andromeda is seen bound helpless to the sky. This woman is free, and is adorning herself as if for some festal occasion. Early drawings represent the figure

¹*Mazzaroth*, pt. ii. 132.

²*Star Names*, p. 147.

as holding aloft the palm, the symbol of victory. It would seem that the same woman is intended to be represented by both the signs. Its Arabic name is said to be *El Seder, the freed*. In the Denderah Zodiac she is named *Set*, which means *set, set up as a Queen*. The Arabic name is *Ruchba, the enthroned; Cassiopeia is the enthroned, the beautiful*. The Greeks made much of this constellation, knowing it as *She of the Throne*. The star names are Alpha, *Sledar, the freed* and Beta, *Chaph, the hand*, holding the branch. All these names combine, and agree with the picture to show a woman freed from bondage and exalted to a position of regal splendour, and who is arraying herself for her exalted position. Observe how closely she is placed to Cepheus the king. He it is who frees her from bondage, and gives not only liberty but glory, and exalts her to share the regal honours with himself. Students of these signs differ in their interpretation of this picture. They agree as to the main idea, but differ as to the peoples represented. Dr. Seiss thinks the Church, and others consider that Israel is intended. It is no part of the writer's intention to criticise views differing from his own. It is sufficient to point to the dispensation wherein these were first originated, and to try to understand what must have been the broad outlines of truth revealed to the antediluvian believers. Whatever may have lain in the womb of the future, we are adding to the record given in the Bible if we assume that either Israel or the Church was revealed to them as destined to high honours in the future. It is better to centre attention upon the fact that whatever the nature and extent of the Gospel message made known, it was intended that the benefits of which it spake should be for those who heard it, believed it, and obeyed it. The first blessing held out to man was that of dominion. His fall put him below its attainment; disobedience constituted unworthiness, but that dominion is attained by the obedient Son of Man, and He will share it with the

faithful of every age. Special blessings will come to Israel, as also special privileges to the Church; but there is no need to put either of these bodies here, although we find later Scriptures refer to their position in terms which speak of marriage and closest union. The blessings secured by the sacrifice shall be bestowed on the obedient believer, and to centre attention upon their fulness and nature, this woman was pictured to the world's grey fathers as a memory sign to keep the promises ever before their eyes. In harmony with this view note what follows in the next decan.

II.—CETUS.

A great Sea Monster, something like a seal or a walrus, its figure covering a large area of the sky, is the next constellation to be considered. Mr. Brown says that Cetus "is in origin the Babylonian *Mummu Tiamatu*, Heb. *Mehumah Tehom* (the-chaos-of-the-deep)." It represents primarily the state of chaos, "when the earth was waste and wild, and darkness was upon the face of the deep (Gen. i. 2); and, secondarily, the reduplication of this in the dark and stormy sea whose tempests, clouds, and gales form the brood of Tiamat, which in Euphratean myth were specially regarded as seven Evil Spirits of great and malignant potency." "The victory of Merodach over her forms one of the staple subjects of Euphratean hymns."³ In this ancient myth, a portion only of the truth is handed down. Here indeed is the power of darkness, but the power symbolised suggests more than darkness and destructive forces. Here is the great enemy who, early in human history, was able to tempt man aside from the path of obedience, and who now appears as the one who holds man in bondage. But the revelation in the heavens and in the Word agree that he also is in bondage, and his

³*Prim. Constellations*, vol. 1, p. 89.

destruction by the Lamb is closely connected with the freedom to be granted to the captive woman. So its brightest star, *Menkar*, means *the chained enemy*.⁴ Beta, the next in brilliancy is called *Diphda*, *vanquished*, or *thrust down*. The star in the neck, Omicron, is one of the most remarkable in the heavens. Its name is *Mira*, *the Wonderful*, said to have been given to it by Helvelius, when it first became known as a variable; but it is in remarkable coincident agreement with the figure that this word *Mira* should be so near akin in form to the Hebrew word *marah* which signifies *the Rebel*, as in Num. xx. 10—"Hear now ye rebels." Its modern discovery as a variable, dates from 1596 A.D., but Mr. Brown thinks there is evidence to justify him in saying, that, "such long and careful observers as the Babylonians would be sure to detect the wonders of *Mira*."⁵ It may be, therefore, that Helvelius but carried forward an old name which conveyed to him a new significance by the rediscovery of variability. During 334 days it shines with its greatest light, then it gradually diminishes till it disappears from unaided sight. "It sometimes sends out at its maximum fifteen hundredfold more light than at its minimum, and after three centuries of notified activity gives no sign of relaxation." It is said that once it disappeared for a period of four years. Is not this the figure of the great enemy of the Bible who is put before us as Leviathan, and whose destruction is a theme of the prophecies of future things?—

"In that day the Lord with his sore, and great, and strong sword shall punish leviathan the swift serpent, and leviathan the crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."
—Isa. xxvii. 1.

⁴Modern writers say that it means the nose, but if so it is inappropriately placed, for it marks the monster's jaws. A reference to Hebrew roots supplies the meaning as above.

⁵*Prim. Con.*, Vol. I. 359.

"For God is my king of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.
Thou didst divide (margin Heb., *break*) the sea by thy
strength,
Thou brakest the heads of the dragons (margin *sea-monsters*) in the water,
Thou brakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces."—
Psa. lxxiv. 12-14.

III.—PERSEUS.

In this constellation, one of the most splendid portions of the galaxy,⁶ we see the figure of a mighty man, "Stepping with one foot on the brightest part of the Milky Way, wearing a helmet on his head, and wings on his feet, holding aloft a great sword in his right hand, and carrying away the blood-dripping head of the Gorgon in his left." His name is *Perseus*, a word, which, says Allen, may be derived from the Hebrew *Parash*, a *horseman*, but here is no horse, and with the learned writer of Mazzaroth we think it far more likely to be derived from the Hebrew *Peretz*, *The Breaker*. This is the word which is found in the prophecy of Micah, who tells of a time when the flock of God shall be gathered, and he goes on to say:—

"THE BREAKER is gone up before them,
They have broken forth and passed on to the gate,
And are gone out thereat :
And their king is passed on before them,
And the Lord at the head of them."

—Micah ii. 13.

On the Egyptian Zodiac his name is *Kar Knem*, *he who fights and subdues*. Here then is "The Breaker," who is no other than the Lamb demolishing all the opposing powers which would prevent the attainment of the purpose for which He gave Himself. This

⁶ On the early morning of February 22, 1901, a new star was discovered in Perseus. On the evening of that date it had reached the first magnitude, and in the course of a few days it began to decline.

shows the method of perfected redemption. It must be effected by power,—not only that which must operate to accomplish the redemption of the individual from sin and the power of the grave, but that also which will actively work to effect the destruction of evil persons, powers, and things. This will be accomplished by the glorious Breaker of the prophecy.

Look also at the star-names. The principal star in the waist, is *Mirfak*, *who assists*. Another, *Gamma*, in the right shoulder, *Al Genib*, *who carries away*. Some writers assign both these names to Alpha, leaving Gamma unnamed. In the left foot is a bright star named *Athik*, *He who breaks*. The attitude of Perseus is that of a victorious warrior who bears with him, in the gory head he carries, the evidence of his prowess, and his conquest over the enemy. His uplifted arm, with the "sore, and great, and strong sword," is the challenge to all who would dispute his right of conquest. He is the rescuer of the captive Andromeda, as held by tradition. Of him and his work for the rescue of Andromeda, Aratus says:—

"Her anxious eyes
Gleam bright with hope ; beneath her Perseus flies,
Her brave deliverer—mighty son of Jove—
His giant strides the blue vault climb and move
A cloud of dust in heaven."

The Greeks said that the head was the head of Medusa, the only one of the fabled Gorgons who was subject to mortality. Perseus slew the Gorgon, and bore away its head. But this is but the perversion of the true story. In the Hebrew this is *Rosh-ha-Satan*, *the head of the Adversary*, and in Arabic *Al Ghoul*, *the ogre, the mischief-maker*, or "demon monster of the waste." The bright star *Beta* in this head is now known as *Algol*, and this, like the star in the neck of Cetus, is a variable. It passes through a range of variability from the second to the fourth magnitude in 2d. 20h. 48m. 57s. "Fit emblem," says Dr. Bullinger, "of our great enemy, who, 'like a roaring lion, goeth

about seeking whom he may devour' (1 Peter v. 8); then changing into a subtle serpent (Gen. iii. 8); then changing again into an 'angel of light' (2 Cor. xi. 14), 'transforming himself continually, to devour, deceive, and destroy.'"

Thus this chapter, like that which closes the first book, shows the triumphant victory over the enemy. Its special phase is determined by the theme of the book. The sacrifice to which attention is called in its first picture is the origin of the life-blessing bestowed upon the sons of men. It is freely poured out for them, but the full bestowment and free enjoyment of the gift is to be when the great enemy is destroyed, and the victorious warrior comes to the possession of that which is His by virtue of His obedience unto death. The story is one, and the pictures which go to make it up are so connected that even those who fail to see the Bible linkage, are compelled to say that the groups "make up a recognised and unmistakable story pictured in the sky; a clear proof that the work of original constellation-making was deliberate, and not haphazard, and that the legends there represented were in existence before the star-groups were made.⁷



⁷ (*Knowledge*, Jan. 1901).

BOOK III.

THE RIGHTFUL KING.

*"No unregarded star
Contracts its light
Into so small a character,
Removed far from our humane sight,
But if we steadfast looke
We shall discern
In it, as in some holy booke,
How man may heavenly knowledge learne."*

HABINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

THE ADVENT IN POWER.

*"Go forth at night
And talk with Al Debaran, where he flames
In the cold forehead of the wintry sky."*

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

*"Behold the Lord came with ten thousands of His holy ones to execute
judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly."*

—JUDE 14, 15.

AS the first and second book of this heavenly library had each its specific theme to present, so also has the third book, to which attention is now to be called. No sooner do we open it, and view its constituent signs, than we are compelled to notice that the main ideas presented are those of irresistible onset, victory and triumph, and associated with these the ideas of perfect rest and safety. Heretofore we have contemplated the sufferings of the Redeemer, and His work; the privileges of the redeemed; their bondage and freedom; here we are called to see the victory of the Redeemer over all His foes, and the "great judgment period and completion of the whole mystery of God respecting our world and the race." These things are shown in symbolic forms which convey the unmistakable story.

The book opens with the figure of an enraged bull, rushing forward with lowered head as if to "thrust through" his enemies with his long sharp horns, and

it closes with the Lion aroused to wrath, and full of majesty and energy, in the act of rending his enemy in pieces. Between these two powerful signs are signs suggestive of possession, and safety; those who are trusting in the work of the Lamb need not fear the wrath of the Lion. Confining attention, however, at present, to the first chapter, we notice that it is made up of the mighty Bull; a warrior holding aloft the skin of his foe; a flowing stream, following many a curve until it disappears from the sight of northern beholders; and a shepherd, who holds in safety in his arm a goat and two young kids. Here is wide diversity of representation, but, as we shall see, a wonderful and helpful harmony of teaching.

TAURUS, the Bull, is represented on the Zodiac as if springing from the body of the Ram, and thus the one Person in His two advents in redemption is vividly set forth. It has been remarked that this group of stars does afford apparently a natural suggestion for its name, for it is not a difficult thing to trace out the forepart of a bull; as Aratus says, "very like lie the stars." It is held that the figure is not to be understood as representing the common bull of any known class, but as picturing the great untameable bull of early ages, the fierce and mighty aurochs. Its name in ancient languages agrees with the modern. All recognised it as the Bull. In Hebrew it is *Shur*, the bull coming; also as *Reem*, the wild ox. Its brightest star marking the eye bears to this day its Chaldee name, *Al Debaran*, the leader, governor. The star, *Beta*, in the northern horn is named *El Nath*, wounded or slain (a star bearing this name is found in Aries). Other stars are *Palilicium* (Heb.), belonging to the judge; *Wasat* (Arab.), centre or foundation; *Al Thuraiya* (Arab.), the abundance.¹

¹The stars of this constellation "were made much of throughout all Egyptian history and religions . . . from the belief that the human race was created when the sun was here."—Allen *Star Names*, p. 381.

In this constellation are two groups of stars that have always had a peculiar interest to men, even when not otherwise interested in the study of the heavens; these are the Pleiades and the Hyades. These groups were known to the ancients as the Clusterers. The Pleiades is the more striking cluster of the two, consisting of six visible stars very close together. Tradition says there were seven, but that at the time of the Trojan war one of them disappeared.²

"Like seven pure brilliants set on ring of gold;
Though each one small, their splendour all combine
To form one gem, and gloriously they shine.
Their number seven, though some men fondly say
And poets feign that one has passed away."

As a matter of fact keen eyes can discern about eleven stars, and the telescope reveals a very large number. It is instructive to note that the closeness of the grouping seems to have impressed all minds. Even the Hottentots called them *Khunusuti*, those who stand together. The word *Pleiades*, signifies the heaped stars, or congregation of the judge, or ruler, and is the translation of the Heb. *Chima*, the heap, or accumulation. It occurs in Job. ix. 9; xxxviii. 31; Amos. v. 8. "The similar Babylonian-Assyrian *Kimtu*, or *Kimmatu*, signifies a 'Family Group.'"³ The Rabbis are said to have called them *Succoth*

²"The Australian Aborigines say the star was once a queen more brilliant than her six surrounding hand-maidens. But Waa, the Crow (our Canopus), carried her off for his bride by means of the following trick:—He disguised himself in the bark of a tree as one of the white grubs prized as a delicacy by black-fellows. When the queen and her hand-maidens sought for grubs, the hooks of the maidens all broke short, until the ivory hook of the lovely queen was pushed into the hole, when out came the grub, changed into gallant Waa, and the queen vanished for ever from her mourning maidens."

—*An Easy Guide to Southern Stars*.

³*Star Names*, p. 393.

Beroth, the tents of the daughters. This group lies on the neck of the Bull safely sheltered and protected by the powerful horns ;

“Not a mighty space
Holds all and they themselves are dim to see.
And seven paths aloft men say they take,
Yet six alone are viewed by mortal eyes.”

ARATUS.

The second group is on the face of the Bull, more widely extended than the Pleiades ; presenting the appearance of the letter V, with Al Debaran at the end of one of the strokes of the letter. The *Hyades* means *the congregated*, thus a similar idea is conveyed by both clusters. What is intended then by these significant groups and star-names? We need not search far for a meaning. Is it not that here is presented the Advent in Power? There are those who speak of the Lord's Coming without reference to the idea of completed redemption. It is supposed to take place at death, or it occurred at the taking of Jerusalem by Titus. With these meagre views they associate the idea that the world is gradually and surely improving, and refuse to look in the many directions where evidences lie thickly strewn that evil in some forms intensifies, and is totally beyond the control of human wisdom and power. They refuse also to accept with literality the many Scriptures, which, since the days of Enoch, have affirmed the advent of the Lord to judgment. But it was that theme which was proclaimed in antediluvian days, and which the heavenly pictures agree to present. The Leader and Governor will come in power, and will take vengeance on His enemies. Later Scriptures take up the same theme, and set it forth in connection with the realisation of the Lord's purpose regarding Israel, and they use language which recalls the picture now before us. (See Isaiah

xiii. 11-15 ; xxxiv. 2-8.) Lest the safety of the redeemed should seem to be imperilled, it is declared in the Word :

“Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers
And shut thy doors about thee ;
Hide thyself for a little moment,
Until the indignation be overpast.”

—Isaiah xxvi. 20.

“For in the day of trouble He shall keep me secretly in His pavilion. In the covert of His tabernacle shall He hide me.”

—Psa. xxvii. 5 ; xxxi. 20.

Here on the neck and face of the Bull are seen the “congregated ones” safe with him when He appears in his power. With Him? Yes, for “when the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it.” This then is a picture of the resistless advent of the Judge, as He comes to destroy His foes, but it is at the same time a picture which tells of the safety of “them that are His.”

I.—ORION.

We proceed to notice the nature of the testimony borne by the attendant decans. The first of the group linked with Taurus, is Orion, “the finest constellation in the heavens, equally remarkable for telescopic interest, and obvious brilliancy.” To the unaided eye, it presents a glorious assemblage of stars. Of it the Greek poet has said :—

“Eastward, beyond the region of the Bull,
Stands great Orion. And who, when night is clear,
Beholds him gleaming bright, shall cast his eyes in vain
To find a sign more glorious in all heaven.”

When Orion shines on high, there is presented to the eye of the beholder a magnificent array of celestial bodies. In Southern latitudes there is a splendid show of first magnitude stars. Orion is figured on

the star-sphere as "a giant hunter, with a mighty club in his right hand in the act of striking, and in his left the skin of a slain lion."

"First in rank
The martial star upon his shoulder flames;
A rival star illuminates his foot;
And on his girdle beams a luminary
Which in vicinity of other stars
Might claim the proudest honours."

He stands with uplifted foot ready to crush the head of the enemy, and from under the down-coming foot there flows the winding stream Eridanus. In his brilliant girdle studded with star-gems is a short sword, the hilt of which, formed as the head and body of the Lamb, clearly testified as to the personage here represented. Longfellow finely describes him:—

"Begirt with many a blazing star

* * *

His sword hung gleaming by his side,
And on his arm the lion's hide
Scattered across the midnight air
The golden radiance of its hair."

The Scripture references to this constellation show that it was well known to the men of early Bible times (Job ix. 9; xxxviii. 31; Amos v. 8). The names given to this figure are strikingly suggestive; he is *Orion*, coming forth as light; the ancient Accadian name was *Ur-ana*, the light of heaven. In the New Testament is a title claimed by the Lord, which seems exactly to gather up into itself the meaning of this figure and its names. He called Himself, "The Light of the World." A name which shall be fully vindicated, not only because He is the source of moral and spiritual light, which banishes the darkness of evil, and floods the mind and heart of man with the radiant beauty of holiness, but because of His power over physical darkness, for when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, "all flesh shall see it together." Note the testimony of the prominent stars which compose

the figure. On the right shoulder is *Betelguese*, the coming of the Branch, as in Isaiah we read, "There shall come forth a shoot out of the stock (Heb. gesa) of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit" (xi. 1). In the left foot uplifted is *Rigel*, the foot. The position of this foot in the figure shows it to be the one which crushes the enemy. In his left breast is another brilliant—named *Bellatrix*, which is now translated *the Female Warrior*, but the name in its present form does not fairly represent the Arabic *Al Najid* the Conqueror. The star Delta, in the belt, is *Al Nitak*, in Arabic, the girdle, but traced to its Hebrew root it is *the wounded one*, and Kappa, in the right leg, is *Saiph*, bruised, in agreement with the passage "He shall bruise (*shuph*) thy head, and thou shalt bruise (*shuph*) his heel" (Gen. iii. 15). In its present meaning of the Arabic name it signifies *the Sword*. His resemblance to Ophiuchus is to be marked; like him, he has one foot bruised; and with the other he is crushing the enemy underfoot. Other stars not now identified express the same ideas; *Al Rai*, who bruises, who breaks; and *Thabit* in Arabic signifies the *Endurer*.

Ancient tradition says that the figure represents Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord, and during the First Empire some French sycophants assigned it to Napoleon, but its ancient names with common consent give it to a greater than either. It is in Arabic, *Al Giauza*, the branch or stem; *Al Gebor*, the mighty; *Al Mirzam*, the ruler, etc., and in Egyptian, *Ha-ga-t*, this is he who triumphs. All these testify to the sublime, powerful, victorious, light-bearing Branch who is to come, and he who has read the Bible descriptions of the Coming One, is in no doubt as to their conformity with those portrayed in this heavenly volume, or that it is the same personage who is pictured in both.

This first decan has developed the idea of the advent in power, as presented in the main sign, and we pass on to notice that it is a coming for judgment.

II.—ERIDANUS.

From the foot of Orion there flows a stream of stars, curving from side to side, and passing under the paws of the Sea Monster, flowing ever downwards, until, to those who framed the ancient Zodiac, it passed quite out of sight. The ancient myths represented this as a river of fire. It is the river into which Phæton was hurled because of his mismanagement of the chariot of the sun, and in which he was consumed. Aratus calls it—

“The starry stream,
For this a remnant of Eridanus
That stream of tears 'neath the god's feet is borne.”

Its name *Eridanus*, means in Hebrew *the river of the judge*. In Accadian it is *Aria-dan, the Strong River*. How often in the Scriptures do we meet with the figure of a river of fire in connection with the advent of the mighty Judge. In the picture given by Daniel (vii. 9-11) of the Ancient of Days, it is said:—

“A fiery stream issued and came forth before Him.”

Other Scriptures agree with this, as—

“Our God shall come and shall not keep silence :
A fire shall devour before Him.”—Psa. i. 3.
“A fire goeth before Him,
And burneth up His adversaries round about.”

—Psa. xcvi. 3.

“Behold the name of the Lord cometh from afar, burning with His anger, and in thick rising smoke : His lips are full of indignation, and His tongue is as a devouring fire. . . . And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of His arm with the indignation of His anger, and the flame of a devouring fire. . . . For a Topheth is prepared of old : yea, for the King it is made ready : He hath made it deep and large : the pile thereof is fire and much wood : the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.”

—Isa. xxx. 27-33.

How closely the picture and the revelation agree ! He who has seen the prophetic pictures in the Book, can turn his eyes to the heavens, and view that winding stream as it flows from the foot of Orion, onwards

to the star *Achernar*, which marks its mouth. The three signs thus linked together afford us a startling, solemnising picture of judgment to come ; a picture which opposes the modern imaginings as to the progress of humanity. Which is true ? The Bible being the witness, we affirm that the heavenly picture is the true one, and man's imaginings are baseless. This serpentine river which the Sea Monster vainly endeavours to stop, associated with the former signs, shows how complete will be the judgment wrought by the mighty Judge. The star-names are connected with it as a stream. *Cursa, bent down, or footstool ; Zourac, flowing ; Pheat, mouth of the river ; Ozha, the going forth, and Achernar, the end of the river*. Here is judgment, what of mercy ? This gracious attribute is indicated in the clusters on the face and neck of the Bull, and is further developed in the last decan.

III.—AURIGA.

So important is this phase, that a whole sign is devoted to it. Here is perfect quietude, rest and safety, represented by Auriga, who tenderly holds the affrighted she-goat, which clings to his neck, and looks back with astonishment upon the terrible Bull ; whilst in his lap are two little kids which he supports with his great hand. The figure is suggestive of the passages of Scripture which speak of the Redeemer as the Shepherd,—the shepherd of power. In the midst of scenes of judgment and wrath, He shows mercy, and gives safety to His own :

“Behold the Lord God will come as a mighty one, and His arm shall rule for Him : behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, He shall gather the lambs in His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that give suck.”

—Isa. xl. 10, 11.

Auriga is usually called the Charioteer, but the name is from a Hebrew root signifying a *shepherd*.

The brightest star, *Capella*, points the place of *the goat* as the prominent feature of the sign. The star *Beta* in Auriga's right arm is *Menkalinon*, *the band*, or *chain of the goats*. In the right foot of the Shepherd is *Gamma* (also reckoned as in the horn of Taurus), called *El Nath*, *wounded* or *slain*. The star *Delta*, unnamed with us, was called by the Hindus, "*Prajor-pato*, *the Lord of created beings*. . . . Why so inconspicuous a star should be found among the few of which Hindoo astronomers have taken particular notice is not easy to discover."⁴ "This is He who is 'the GOOD Shepherd,' who gave His life for the sheep (John x. 11), but He was 'the GREAT Shepherd' brought again from the dead (Heb. xiii. 20); and is now 'the CHIEF Shepherd' (1 Pet. v. 4), seen in the day of His coming glory"⁵

Thus to the early men of our race, ere yet the waters of the Deluge had overwhelmed the evil-doers, the great central truths of redemption were taught and impressed upon the mind. The coming time of wrath, with the destruction of the enemy; the fiery stream which should devour the adversaries; the safety of the redeemed in the care of the "GREAT," "GOOD," "CHIEF," Shepherd; . . . these were all taught, and still form a part of the main outline of the Gospel message as it has come to us. The dispensations as they succeeded each other, have brought to us a knowledge of the historical procedure followed by the Lord to work out His purposes, but the end is always the same, and the historical facts have been steps towards the realisation of the issues which the pictures on the heavenly scroll had put before the eye and mind of the fathers of the race. Judgment and mercy were both revealed, and the issues,—destruction or salvation,—were clearly set before men.

⁴*Star Names*, p. 90.

⁵*Witness of the Stars*, p. 135.

CHAPTER II.

UNITY IN RULE AND REDEMPTION.

"Safe comes the ship to haven
Through billows and through gales,
If once the great Twin Brethren
Sit shining on the sails."

MACAULAY.

"Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the peoples,
A LEADER and COMMANDER to the peoples."

—ISAIAH. LV. 4.

THE second sign in this third book presents us with a picture of two human figures seated in close embrace upon the Milky Way, and its decans are three four-footed creatures—a Hare and two Dogs.

As in the Word of God, so in the heavenly pictures, there are truths asserted, repeated, and presented in other aspects. Already we have seen in at least two of the figures the presentation of the dual nature of Christ, and in other signs His two-fold work as Redeemer and Conqueror. In this double figure it may be that the first of these is again asserted; but it is certain that the latter is, for the star-names lead us without hesitation to that conclusion.

The figures in this sign are known to us as *Gemini*, *the Twins*,¹ and the bright stars which

¹This is a beautiful constellation; in it "are yellow, purple, topaz, violet, grey, pale blue, and red stars, and several beautiful clusters."—WEBB.

mark their heads are *Castor* and *Pollux*. These are Latin names, but the Greeks called them *Apollo* and *Hercules*. The Hebrew and Syriac name is *Thaumin*, the united. The Arabic is *Al Tauman*, the twins, or pair. The Coptic name is given by Miss Rolleston as *Pi Mahi*, the united, as in brotherhood. The unity, therefore, of two persons, or of one person in two offices is set forth in these figures.

"So like they were, no mortal
Might one from other know."

One of the twins bears a club, but it is leaning against his shoulder in a state of repose. In the figure of the giant *Hercules*, and in that of *Orion*, the club is uplifted in the act of smiting the enemy. There can be little doubt that this figure is designed as in some sense carrying forward the teaching conveyed by the attitude of those two warriors. But, here, the club is in repose; the conflict is represented as over, or there is a period of rest. This is the uppermost of the two figures as seen in the Southern hemisphere, and is known to us by its Greek name *Pollux*, ruler or judge, or *Hercules*, who cometh to labour, or to suffer. This name is given to *Beta* its brightest star marking the head. In the left foot is another star called *Al Henah*, hurt, afflicted. At the girdle is *Wasat*, which means centre, or set. But little imagination is needed to link this with Him who came to do God's will, who was "set" or "appointed" for the work before Him, and who "steadfastly set His face to go" that it might be accomplished. Here, then, is the suffering One, who, with steadfast purpose trod the path of humiliation, and has won for Himself and those whom He came to redeem the "rest that remaineth."

The other figure carries a bow and arrow, also at rest. The bowstring is loose, and the arrow is laid

along the bow; a further indication that the conflict is won. The star names in this second figure are suggestive—*Castor*,² in later days *Apollo*, ruler or judge. In the left knee is the star ϵ , *Mebstuta*, trodden under foot. In *Sagittarius* the bow is drawn by the Archer to its fullest tension, and the arrow is ready for discharge to the heart of the enemy; but that work is here represented as done, for the bowstring is slackened in repose. Thus the two figures unite to present two aspects of the Redeemer's work. Here is conquest, victory, attained by Him who suffered, and bled and died. The union of the suffering and the victory in one person caused stumbling to the Jew, but the New Testament history has made the apparent difficulty to disappear, and we now see in Him who was "obedient unto death" the conquering ruler before whom "every knee shall bow." Other star-names in the sign are *Al Giausa*, the palm branch, stem; *Almeisan*, the proudly marching one; *Al Dira*, the seed (or branch), a name given by the Arabs to the ell measure of length, said to be indicated by the distance between the two chief stars.

I.—LEPUS.

The time of rest and repose can only come as the enemy who hinders is put out of the way. This is the truth asserted from the earliest pages of revelation. The initial promise of redemption declared that the seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head. In *Genesis* is begun the history of the enmity, and the *Revelation* gives its close; but long ere John, on *Patmos*' Isle, saw his entrancing visions, the fathers of the race knew of the overthrow of the enemy and perpetuated the glad assurance by these pictures in the sky. Beneath the descending foot of *Orion* is found the first decan of this sign. It is a four-footed animal,

²The largest and finest of all the double stars in the Northern hemisphere.—HERSCHELL.

understand why the early fathers, whose hopes centred in the coming seed, selected the most brilliant of the stars and constellations to represent Him, and especially fixed upon this most glorious of the stars to set forth the Prince of princes, who should come in glory as the illustrious ruler, with mighty power to overthrow His enemies, and establish His rule of peace and blessing. The second decan amplifies the teaching suggested by the figure of *Castor*, and should henceforth be to every reader of this a prompter to revive in the memory the promises of the dignity and glory which yet await the Saviour of mankind.

III.—CANIS MINOR.

Beyond *Sirius*, and on the other side of the Milky Way, is the Second Dog. Its brightest star, a fine yellow, with several minute companions, is called *Procyon*, a Greek word which means *before the Dog*. This is said to be its name from the earliest Greek writings, and was so known, because it rose before *Sirius*. But as it is admitted that Grecian astronomy was received from the East, it is likely that the name of this star came to them, and that they adopted it without carrying over its original meaning. Miss Rolleston gives as its origin the Hebrew root *parag*, translated "redeemed"—Psa. cxxxvi. 24, cf. also Dan. iv. 24. Thus He is *the Redeemer* or *Deliverer*. This is the Prince in that representation of His work set forth in the second figure of the Twins. He is the triumphant Redeemer, and the two great truths of His work in humiliation and glory are set forth and linked together by these figures. The second star is *Al Gomeisa*, *the burdened, loaded, bearing for others*; others are *Al Mirzam*, *prince or ruler*, and *Al Gomeyra*, *who completes, perfects*.

This is a beautiful and instructive chapter. It gathers up the main phases of the work of the Redeemer and shows the result which is attained. By His work in humiliation and suffering, as represented

by the Victim, the Cross, the dying Goat, the Arrow, the falling Eagle, and the Ram of sacrifice, He began to do that which was "written of Him," preparing for the glorious issues to follow. He is now, according to the revelation, ascended to the right hand of God. Thence He will come to perfect the wonderful purpose, as predicted by the prophets, and as represented in the sky-pictures in the Serpent-Holder, the mighty Hercules, the princely Archer, the rushing Bull, and the glorious Orion. He will destroy the Enemy, and thereby enter into His rest. The humiliation, and the victory, the sufferings and the glory are all necessary to effect the consummation, and all are depicted in the brilliant garnishing of the heavens. Further studies will show that the blessings won are to be shared by others, but meanwhile it is plain that the pathway travelled by the Redeemer of mankind by way of the suffering, leads to victory, to rulership, and to repose.



CHAPTER III.

GATHERING THE RANSOMED.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd."

—JOHN X. 16.

WE have noted how certain special ideas are presented by the star-groups: the main sign suggesting the outline thought, and the decans repeating and developing this with further detail. This feature is markedly evident in the group which now comes before us. That which is true of the Zodiacal signs and their decans, is also true when we enlarge the groups and view them in the books. Taurus, the first sign in this last book, unmistakably shows the advent in power: the destruction of the enemies of the great Leader and Commander of His people. Auriga, the third decan connected with the Bull, showed the safety of those who were protected by the shepherd. But that idea,—the safety and shelter of the redeemed—is not to be viewed as an offshoot of His work in the overthrow of the enemies, but it is one of the great direct results of that work, and so in the group now before us all the signs are devoted to the setting forth in prolific detail of this blessed aspect of redemption.

It is to be noted that the signs which compose this group are nearly on the same meridian, and they

reach almost from pole to pole, for the northern pole-star is in the tail of *Ursa Minor*, and *Canopus* in *Argo* (invisible to dwellers in high northern latitudes) is within 38° of the South pole of the heavens. In the last group were two dogs, a greater and a lesser, and in this are two bears, a greater and a lesser. The main sign is Cancer, a crab, and the last decan is *Argo*, the ship. Although the forms are so diverse as they appear on the pictured Zodiac, yet a close examination shows that they present one easily traceable idea.

There is some doubt as to whether or not we have in Cancer the original picture of this eleventh sign. We know it now as a gigantic crab, lying where the tropic of Cancer passes through

"From end to end, where the straight line would best
Divide it."


And it seems also likely that an early mistake has altered the forms of the constellations known to us as the Bears. But if so, the primitive teaching has not been lost, for the star-names give this in unmistakable language, and their position in the associated group of signs aids in fixing the sense.

In the ancient Zodiacs of Denderah and Esneh this sign is represented as a sacred beetle, but the name given to it in the Denderah sphere is *Klaria*, the *cattle folds*. The Arabic name is *Al Sartan*, the Syriac *Sartane*, both meaning *who holds*, or *binds*, the Greek is *Karkinos*, one meaning of which is, a circle, so *encircling*. It has been suggested that in the Latin Cancer we have the carrying over of *Khan*, an *inn*, a *travellers' resting-place*, and *ker*, or *cer*, which means *embraced*, or *encircled*, held as within encircling arms. The evident agreement of these names shows that whether we have the original picture or not, the primitive idea has been retained of holding, or binding together, of rest

secured, and this view is strengthened as we proceed to note the names of the stars found in this sign. In the head of the crab is the triple star Zeta, named *Tegmine, holding, the covering; Acubene*, in the lower large claw, means the sheltering or *hiding-place*. The whole constellation is faint, but it contains a remarkable cluster of stars just resolvable by the naked eye. It is popularly known as the Beehive, but its Latin name is *Praesepe a thing fenced in*. It is believed that is its ancient name, the Hebrew root of which signifying a *multitude, off-spring*. Its Arabic name is *Al Ma'alaph*, the *Stall*, said to be from the Semitic root, to bring forth thousands (Psa. cxliv. 13). It is on record that this cluster was noted by the ancients 2,000 years ago, its dimness and disappearance being regarded as the first sign of approaching rain. It is worthy of note that the clusters of the Pleiades and Praesepe (known as the Clusterers), were both named by the ancients to convey the idea of a multitude in safety. The one is the *congregation of the Judge*, and the other, *multitude, off-spring*. Both lie well within the constellations to which they belong,—the Pleiades on the neck of the Bull, and Praesepe almost in the centre of the Crab, and both are within the third book of the Zodiac.

Near to this cluster, and lying north and south of it are two stars that have always been associated with it. These are *Asellus Boreas, the northern Ass*, and *Asellus Australis, the southern Ass*, the idea of the Latins being that Praesepe was the manger from which the asses were fed.

“Like a little mist
Far north in Cancer’s territory it floats;
Its confines are two faintly glimmering stars;
These are two asses that a manger parts.”

The symbol  by which Cancer is known comes from these two asses. Writers on the con-

stellations see in these the reference to Jacob’s blessing on Issachar—

“Issachar is a strong ass,
Crouching down between the sheepfolds;
And he saw a resting-place that it was good;
And the land that it was pleasant;
And he bowed his shoulder to bear,
And became a servant under task work.”

—Gen. xlix. 11.

Whether this is justified or not, it is clear that the suggestion made by the original names of the constellation is borne out by the names which have been given to its remarkable cluster, and its more prominent stars. Here is the holding fast of the multitudes, where the thousands brought forth shall be received by the Redeemer whose work in suffering, and in glory provides them a quiet resting-place.

I.—URSA MINOR.

This is the first of the two bears, both of which are tailed. This addition, in conjunction with the fact that such forms are unknown on many zodiacs, has led to the belief that they do not rightly represent the originals. I do not think that we ought to insist too strongly upon the incongruity of the representation, in face of such figures as the Centaur, Capricorn, and Pegasus. At all events, those who first represented the bears in this manner were apparently compelled to add the tails, but that did not hinder the adoption of the figure. The most serious objection which occurs to me is that the star names suggest another idea, in perfect harmony with the main sign, and especially with the third decan. This constellation, or the Pole Star, is known as *Cynosure, the Dog’s tail*, a name which certainly does not agree with the figure, now accepted as that of a bear. “Very recently however, Brown has suggested that the word is not Hellenic in origin but Euphratean.” He gives

as its translation *high-in-rising*, a name which states a fact. He has written elsewhere "The Pole Star was also called *Duggagilgatil—The-High-One-of-the-Enclosure-of-Life*, and there is much reason to believe that the Enclosure-of-Life of which the Pole Star was lord, is the famous 'Oblong' formed by the stars β , γ , η and ξ of the Little Bear."¹ This constellation is now important because its brightest star, at the tip of the tail, is the north pole star, named Polaris because of its central position. Centuries ago the star Thuban, in the Dragon, marked this centre, but owing to the precession of the equinoxes the point has shifted until it is now almost identical with this star in the tail of the Bear. Its motion is in such a small circle that it cannot be detected save by careful measurement.²

"Chaldean shepherds, ranging trackless fields,
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies;
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude;
Looked on the Polar Star, as on a guide,
And guardian of their course, that never closed
His steadfast eye."

WORDSWORTH.

The ancient name of this star is *Al Ruccaba*, the turned or ridden on. The next in brightness is *Kochab*, waiting Him who cometh. *Al Pherkadain*, the calves, or the young; *Al Gedi*, the kid; while

¹*Primitive Constellations*, Vol. II., p. 185.

²The true pole is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ degrees from this star. This distance will gradually diminish until it is reduced to about 26min. 30sec. in A.D. 2095; it will then increase again, and after the lapse of a long period of time it will depart from this star, which will then cease to bear the name of or serve the purpose of a Pole Star.—*Chamber's Handbook of Astronomy*, Vol. III., 2.

Shakespeare did not know of this when he wrote of

"The Northern Star
Of whose true fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament."

Arcas, or *Arctos*, "means according to one interpreter, a travelling company; or, according to another, the stronghold of the saved." . . . So far, then, it seems evident that the signification attached to the main sign belongs also to this. Before fully deciding, however, let us look at the second decan, which is like it in appearance, differing only in that it is of larger size.

II.—URSA MAJOR.

This is a large constellation, usually employed as a good starting-point whence the youthful astronomical student in northern latitudes may commence to learn the constellations. It is variously known as the Great Bear, the Plough, and Charles' Wain. In the Old Testament it is mentioned twice:—

"Which maketh the Bear, Orion and the Pleiades,
And the chambers of the South."

—Job ix. 9.

"Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth (marg., the signs of the Zodiac) in their season?
Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?"

—Job xxxviii. 32.

The Arabs still call it by a name which seems to accord with the Bible name. Job calls it Ash, and the Arabs say it is *Al Naish*, or *Annaish*, the assembled together, as sheep in a fold. As in the case of the Little Bear, so in that of the Greater, it is held that the sign of the Bear is not an accurate representation of the original picture, and it is believed that it is one of the star names found in this constellation which has led later astronomers astray. This star, the chief in the group, is *Dubhe*, a herd of animals, or a fold. But in Hebrew there is a word similar in sound, but not in spelling, *Dohv* which means a bear. It is believed that the Hebrew *Dohver*, a fold, and *Dohv*, a bear, were confused, and so the original fold was

changed into an animal. If this is correct, then the two bears are respectively, the lesser and the greater sheepfold. There is a confusing list of star-names handed down, with this constellation, and a no less confusing table of translations. Many of these, both of names and meanings, are out of all harmony with the signs, and may be dismissed as so many tokens of ignorance as to the true figure—or perhaps of ignorance on the part of the translator who has been satisfied with modern applications, and has not sought for the meaning of the original names. The following list supplied by Miss Rolleston has the merit of close agreement with the original idea of the Fold, and with the names of the stars composing the Little Bear. The star β is named *Merach, the flock* (Arabic, *purchased*), the next is *Phacda, visited, guarded, or numbered*; *Alioth, a she-goat*; *Mizar, separate or small*; *Al Cor, the lamb*. The star at the extremity of the tail is *Benet Naish, the daughters of the assembly*, also known as *Al Kaid, the assembled*. Other names are *El Alcola, the sheepfold*; *Cab'd al Asad, multitude, many assembled*; *Annaish, the assembled*; *Megrez, separated*; *El Kaphrah, protected, covered*; (this carries over the idea found in the Hebrew *Kaphar, to cover, to atone*, and so to redeem); *Dubbeh Lachar, the latter herd or flock*; *Helike, company of travellers*; *Amaza, coming and going*; *Calisto, the sheepfold set, or appointed*; *Arctos, travelling*. Here is remarkable agreement in the signification of these names; they point to the "fold" as the thing intended to be set forth in this constellation.³

If that is accepted, then ere we are invited to witness the final overthrow, we are shown the gathering of

³We cannot tell whether the designs in this book have come down to us entirely without alteration. . . . We do not know whether the Bears were originally bears, or wagons, or chariots, or flocks of sheep.—E. W. MAUNDER, in *Nineteenth Century*.

the flocks, and see them safely sheltered before the storm of wrath bursts. They are hidden in the pavilion, where no harm can reach them. Here, then, are two folds. This, however it may be understood, is certainly a fore-picture of the Bible revelation of the great doctrine of election, and the two folds combine to show how complete will be the issue of the work of the Redeemer, in His suffering and His glory.

But the great truth symbolised in these two signs is carried forward, repeated, and extended in the closing decan.

III.—ARGO.

This is one of the largest, as it is one of the most resplendent of the constellations. A large part of it lies upon the Milky Way. It is represented on the spheres as a ship, or part of a ship, and is shown as coming to rest, having reached port, its long voyage over,—

"Stern forward Argo by the great Dog's tail
Is drawn; for her's is not a usual course,
But backward turned she comes, as vessels do
When sailors have transposed the crooked stern
On entering harbour; all the ship reverse,
And gliding backward on the beach it grounds."

ARATUS.

With this idea the names agree. *Argo*, is a *company of travellers*. But who are they? The ancient Greeks said that this ship was the ship of the Argonauts returning from their successful quest of the Golden Fleece, but we are more likely to reach truth if we listen to what the star-names have to tell. The brightest star is *Canopus*, in Egypt known as *Karbana*, where it was noted for its great brightness. An Egyptian poet of the time of Thothmes III. sings,—

"Which pours his light in a glance of fire
When he disperses the morning dew."

The original name of this star is unknown, but the similarity of Egyptian and Grecian forms suggests a common origin, and this, referred to a Semitic source, gives *Canopus* as meaning *the possession of him that cometh*, thus throwing light upon the meaning of this ship with its company of travellers. They belong to the coming Redeemer, for he has purchased them with His blood, and has redeemed them; they are "the children whom thou hast given me." One other star is identified, known as Iota on the charts, *Tureis*, *the possession*. Others are *Sephina*, *the multitude*, or *abundance*; and *Soheil*, *the desired*. "This word was a personal title in Arabia, and, Delitzsch says, the symbol of what is brilliant, glorious, and beautiful; even now among the nomads it is thus applied to a handsome person."⁴ Peoples gathered, folded, are not these great governing Bible ideas regarding the issues of the work of Christ? Whence comes this remarkable agreement between the heavenly picture book, and the revelation in the Word? Here is salvation put before us in its pictured form, showing the safety and shelter of the ransomed;—"He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." It may be wrong to press the comparison, but it is at least noticeable, that these pictures show three companies, differing in size, and in their nearness to the centre.

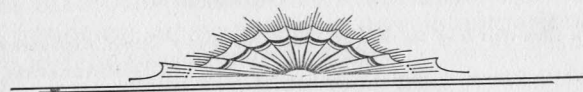
"On high the lesser sheepfold dim,
Yet ever centred upon Him.
And next the greater flock and fold
Around the steadfast pole are rolled.
Argo the company below
Of travellers to Heaven who go."

ROLLESTON.

The Scripture also presents the three, but the revelation concerning these has been progressive: the Church; Israel; and "all families of the earth."

⁴ *Star Names* p. 68.

It may well be said that the details now familiar to us through the written record were unknown to those who first enshrined the story of redemption in the stars; but it is certain that the great facts of the ransom, protection, and gathering of those who were redeemed were known to them, and in this group of pictures those things were set forth, to be remembered by their descendants, until the pictured prophecies should pass into actual realization.



CHAPTER IV.

THE ENEMY'S OVERTHROW.

*"Come, in Thy glorious might,
Come with the iron rod,
Scattering Thy foes before Thy face,
Thou mighty Son of God.
Come, spoil the strong man's house,
Bind him and cast him hence;
Show Thyself stronger than the strong,
Thyself Omnipotence."*

BONAR.

"The Lion has roared, who will not fear?"

—AMOS III. 8.

"The Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome."

—REVELATION V. 5.

THIS chapter brings us to the end of our study of the circle of the Zodiacal signs, with their decans. Beginning with the sign Virgo, the successive groups have presented a growing and consistent display of the whole message which the pictures were designed to set forth. The sign with which the Zodiacal circle closes is eminently adapted to show the consummation to which our thoughts have been led again and again as the readings have proceeded,—the consummation of the Redeemer's triumph, in the enemy's final overthrow. Phases of that victory have been given, but they have stopped short of the consummation; but here is the end

beyond which nothing more needs to be done, so far as any contest between good and evil is concerned. With this picture of effective overthrow the written revelation agrees, for it is the work of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, which, according to the prophetic word, completes and crowns the work of the Lamb. The round of the Zodiac and its associated pictures yield ample evidence that victory attends the work of the Redeemer. The foot of the Serpent-Holder is over the heart of the Scorpion; Hercules is about to crush the head of the Dragon; the arrow in the bow of the Archer is drawn to the head ready for discharge; Perseus carries the Gorgon's head and his sword is uplifted for further warfare if needed; the Bull rushes forward to overthrow his enemies; and Orion, with club raised on high, shines resplendent in the attitude of irresistible power. But this sign goes further: whilst it agrees with the others in presenting the resistless might of the Conqueror, it, with its side pieces, sets forth unmistakably the destructive effect upon the enemy, and carries forward the teaching of the preceding signs on this matter to completion by showing the consummated victory.

The group shows a Lion roused to wrath; in the full vigour of his strength he is ready to rend his foe in pieces. Beneath him is the long outstretched body of the Serpent, and upon it is a cup, so closely united to it that the bottom of the cup is formed of stars which are in the body of Hydra; and a bird of prey, the raven, is engaged in feasting upon the still living body of the serpent. This is the group, and we venture to say that apart from the story of redemption it has no possible coherent explanation; but with that before us it becomes beautifully clear, and puts in picture form what the prophets of God have sketched in His Word in clear language. The Book of Revelation shows the Lion aroused in his majesty to action,—the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

There, also, is the "Old Serpent," and there, too, is the pouring forth of the cup of divine anger,—the emptying of the bowls "full of the wrath of God." And, lastly, there is the call to the "birds that fly in mid heaven" to feast upon the enemies of the Lord. Is this merely coincidence? If it is, it is one of the most astounding ever presented. When it is remembered that the picture comes at the end of a long array of delineations, each of which affords similar striking identity with the declarations of the written Word, it becomes impossible to believe other than that this last set of pictures falls into line with the rest, and that it showed to the early members of the race the fact and manner of the utter destruction of evil, of evil doers, and their leader,—the serpent that deceived. Now we will examine the details to find whether, and how far, they support the general idea presented by the group as a whole.

Leo is a fine constellation easily distinguished by the Sickle of stars that mark its forepart, and by the right-angled triangle that denotes the haunch. Mr. Maunder calls it the "most famous of all the constellations of the Zodiac. Its supremacy is, beyond question, due to the fact that the place of the sun at the summer solstice was in this constellation at the time when they were first defined." Its name in all the languages is one. The Hebrew *Arieh*, the Accadian *Ur-gula*; the Persian *Shir*, the Babylonian *Aru*; with the later Greek and Latin names, all meaning *Lion*. At the bottom of the handle of the Sickle, and very nearly in the pathway of the sun, is the leading star, *Regulus, King*, said to have been so named by Copernicus. The Accadians called it *Lugal, the King*; other peoples give it names equivalent to this; it is known to moderns as *Cor Leonis, the heart of the Lion*. The next star in brightness marks the tip of the tail, and is named *Denebola, the Judge, or Lord, who cometh*. *Gamma*, in the shoulder is *Al Ghiebhā, the exalta-*

tion.¹ On the back of the Lion is a star marked in the charts as *Delta*; this is called *Zosma, shining forth*. Another is *Minchir al Asad, the punishing or tearing of the Lion (piercing)*. One, named *Sarcam, the joining*, is supposed by Bullinger to intimate "that here is the point where the two ends of the Zodiacal circle have their joining." Summing up the teaching contained in these names, have we not a clear and expressive annunciation of Him of whom the Scripture speaks as the Lion of the tribe of Judah? He is exalted, and shall be; He shall shine forth in His glory; He is coming to judge the world, and He will put down the enemy and tread him underfoot. The attitude of the noble beast, as it stands on the ecliptic, vividly pictures the wrath which will energise the Judge when He cometh to "take vengeance."

"He shall eat up the nations his adversaries,
And shall break their bones in pieces,
And smite them through with his arrows;
He couched, he lay down as a Lion,
And as a Lioness, who shall rouse him up?"

—Num. xxiv. 8, 9.

I.—HYDRA.

The story told by the decans complete the presentation, for in them the effect of the Lion's wrath is seen. Hydra is the longest constellation in the sky, extending through more than six hours of right Ascension in a direction nearly east and west. From dimmest antiquity this form has been handed down

¹Admiral Smyth said of this star: "it has been improperly called Algieba from *Al jeh-bah*, the forehead; for no representation of the Lion which I have examined, will justify that position." Quite so, but if the Admiral had looked back a little further he might have found another meaning with more justification than the one he has chosen and much more in harmony with the Bible statement that God "callesth the stars by name."

as connected with the stars, and it seems certain that it has been intended as the visible representation of some well-known idea, as Mr. Brown remarks, "no reasonable person acquainted with the representations of the great snake on the monuments can well deny that the constellation framer in arbitrarily (so far as natural shape is concerned) linking together stars from Cancer to Libra in the form of a serpent, was making a stellar reduplication of an idea already familiar to his mind."² Here, in this long, outstretched form of the "Swift, or fleeing serpent" (Job xxvi. 13) is gathered all the presentations of the enemy which have been before us in these heavenly pictures, and, as the Lion is shown as aroused to wrath, alert, and ready to spring, so the enemy is represented as fleeing from him. It is no open fight, but the hopelessness of resistance is clearly manifest; the serpent is stretched out to escape, but it cannot hope to evade the down-coming feet of the Lion just above its neck. Its name is *Hydra, the water snake*, or, referred to Hebrew root,—*he is abhorred*. The leading star in this constellation is named *Al Phard, the separated, the put away, the solitary one*; another, *Al Drian, the abhorred*; yet another, *Minchir al Sugia, the piercing of the deceiver*. The names are in perfect harmony with the picture, and show how true is the impression which a view of it conveys. Here is the destruction of the enemy, by the presence, and power, and wrath of the Redeemer in His Lion-like advent.

"In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the swift (*i.e.* gliding, or fleeing) serpent, and leviathan the crooked serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

—Isa. xxvii. 1.

This verse suggestively combines the three sky representations of Hydra, Draco, and Cetus.

²*Primitive Constellations*, Vol. II., p. 240.

II.—CRATER.

Owing to the position of Crater and Corvus, the one resting on the back of the serpent, and the other with its claws embedded in its flesh, they have been called the "parasite constellations of Hydra." Crater is shown on the star spheres as an ancient cup, or urn, the two most prominent stars determine the bottom of the cup, and are sunk into the body of the serpent. Brown states that "a legend, located in Asia Minor, connected Crater with the mixing of human blood with wine in a bowl.³ Place beside this figure and the tradition the following:—

"For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup,
And the wine is red: it is full of mixture,
And he poureth out of the same:
But the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth
shall wring them out and drink them."

This is "the cup of His anger," "the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath," and from it the enemies of the Lord shall "drink of the wrath of the Almighty." The star Alpha is called *Al Ches, the cup*, and it is interesting to know that just following it is a small red star described as being "scarlet, almost blood-red; a most intense and curious colour."

III.—CORVUS.

The last decan of this group is the Raven which stands upon the body of Hydra, grasping its flesh with his claws, and tearing it with his beak. "It is the sign of the absolute discomfiture and destruction of the Serpent and all his power; for when the birds once begin to tear and gorge the flesh of fallen foes, no further power to resist, harm, or annoy remains in them. Their course is run." The name of this sign in the Denderah Zodiac is *Her-na, the enemy broken*, or, *breaking up*. In the eye of the Raven is its

³*Primitive Constellations*, Vol. I., p. 107.

brightest star, *Al Chiba, the curse inflicted*; it is also known as *Minchir al Gorab, the Raven's Beak*, or *the Raven tearing in pieces*. The star in the right wing is *Al Goreb, the Raven* (a wide double, the colours pale yellow and purple). How complete the picture! Very early in the circle do we see the enemy stinging the Redeemer's heel, and seeking to attain to dominion; but the end is sure. The Redeemer's foe, man's great enemy, shall be vanquished, and the victory shall be complete. Nothing can convey this idea of completeness more suggestively than this last picture. The Scriptures use the figure with the same idea of complete destruction:—

"The eye that mocketh at his father,
And despiseth to obey his mother,
The ravens of the valley shall pick it out,
And the young eagles shall eat it."

—Proverbs xxx. 17.

When David fought with Goliath, the combatants, as they taunted each other, used this figure. Goliath boasted that the flesh of David should be given to the fowls of the air, and David, in response, widens the statement to include all the Philistines:

"I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel: . . . for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hand."—1 Sam. xvii. 46, 47. See also Jer. vii. 33.

But it is to the picture of the great day of God Almighty that the mind turns, for the fact which, answers to this heavenly delineation. John, as he stood looking into the future, with spirit-strengthened vision, saw an angel standing in the sun, and heard his clarion voice calling:

"To all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come and be gathered unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great."

—Rev. xix. 17, 18.

Thus shall the great conflict end. This is the divine solution of the problem of evil, about which men are guessing to-day. But the men of earliest ages, whose ignorance is asserted by the moderns puffed up with their learning, held the key of the problem. Their long life, freedom from distracting cares, love for meditation on high things, and the revelation vouchsafed, furnished them with the knowledge men now push aside. That knowledge they enshrined in a library which never decays, and which is accessible to all. It is contained in a universal language, and its arrangement of leading and supplementary pictures, its successive books, and its significant chapters, constitute a volume easy to read, and filled with never-ending suggestion.



ADDENDA

*There is a Morning-Star my soul,
There is a Morning-Star;
'Twill soon be near and bright, tho now
It seems so dim and far.
And when time's stars have come and gone,
And every mist of earth has flown,
That better star shall rise
On this world's clouded skies,
To shine for ever!*

BONAR.

CHAPTER I.
THE MILKY WAY.

*"Lift up your eyes on high,
And see Who hath created these,
That bringeth out their host by number :
He calleth them all by name ;
By the greatness of His might,
And for that He is strong in power,
Not one is lacking."*

—ISAIAH xl. 26.

*"A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear—
Seen in the Galaxy, that Milky Way
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest
Powdered with stars."*

MILTON.

THE question may possibly occur to a reader who has followed the outline thus far presented, 'If it be true that the early fathers of the race did thus associate with the stars the hopes they cherished concerning the purpose, the way, and manner of redemption from their fallen state, is it possible that they attached no signification in their constructive picture-building to the splendid path of light, circling the heavens, which we know as the Milky Way?' In answer to that it might be said, that it was no part of the design of these early constellation framers to cover the face of the heavens with their scrolls, or to use all the available material ; indeed, it is the fact of large spaces left without being used which

has caused so much wonderment to moderns, and which has led some to attempt to fill up the vacancies with outlines which, in most cases, perpetuate the folly of the framers, and are out of harmony with the grand original signs. It is not within my power to say that they did or did not use the Galaxy with some definite object in view, but it is certain that it has been to men of all historic time an object of wonder. It has been generally thought of as the *River of Heaven*, and by the Hebrews repeatedly as the *River of Light*. Apart, however, from these general ideas I may point to what is certainly a significant thing, which, seems to show that it was used as that part of the heavens upon which were specially hung the pictures which set forth clearly the Two Advents of the Redeemer.

This band across the sky, which is one of the first things we notice as we turn our gaze upwards on any clear, moonless night, is indeed a never-ending cause for wonder. We view this river of hazy brightness, its unchanging course, and its undimmed lustre, and ask what can be the reason for its existence, and what the cause of the shimmering glory which lies beyond the power of our mightiest instruments to resolve.

Long before the telescope was invented the Galaxy attracted the speculations of astronomers, as they traced its course athwart the sky and wondered what it could be. Of course, they had their fables to explain it. Metrodorus considered it to be the original course of the Sun, abandoned by him after the bloody banquet of Thyestes. Others pretended that it was the track followed by Phaeton, when he rashly sought to drive the chariot of the sun, his incompetency for the task being proved by the accident which occurred. Yet another view was that the Way was made up of the ears of corn dropped by Isis in her flight from Typhon. The philosophical explanations differ almost as widely as the mythical: Aristotle imagined it to be the result of gaseous

exhalations from the earth, which were set on fire in the sky; Theophrastus thought it to be the soldering together of two hemispheres; Diodorus conceived that when we view the Galaxy we see the celestial fire showing itself through the clefts, which indicates that the two hemispheres are about to burst asunder. The Germans, and our own forefathers, thought that here was Jacob's Ladder, and that along this ray of light the angels ascended and descended.¹ It was not until Galileo, turned his little telescope upon this band of light that its true nature became, in some measure, known. Some, before his day, had guessed with close approximation to truth, that it was "nothing more or less than a vast assemblage of stars." About the first century of the Christian Era, an astronomical poet, Manilius, wrote of the Milky Way:—

"Or is the spacious bend serenely bright
From little stars, which there their beams unite,
And make one solid and continued light?"

The instrument of Galileo showed him that these speculations could be confirmed, for it revealed to him "a glorious assemblage of stars of all orders of brightness." Yet there were reaches which he could not resolve. Since his day telescopes have been made of enormous light-gathering and penetrative power, and each accession of size and power has meant a further resolution of stars. But even to the mightiest instruments there lie visible the clouds of light which defy their powers. The aid of photography has been enlisted, and though it surpasses the largest telescope in its power to resolve into stars, it cannot pierce and resolve the wreaths of nebulous matter which lie in that shimmering stream of light.

¹According to Maori tradition, when the Milky Way is distinctly seen it is the sign of a fruitless season. It is a great *taniwha*, or reptile god, who has a large canoe on the other side of heaven called Kanetaka, having a man on board named Pupuki.—TAYLOR'S *New Zealand*.

Surely that great band of lustrous beauty, in its silent sweep across the sky, declares the glory of God, and voices His power. But I conceive that its glory becomes more impressive when we see it as the background on which are placed some of the most striking pictures hung in heaven's gallery, and their significance becomes deepened as we note them in connection with it, and with each other. Astronomers have noted that the lucid stars lie more thickly strewn upon and near this river of light, than on any other part of the heavens, and, at least in the Southern Hemisphere, if one is acquainted with the brighter stars, it is possible by them to trace the course of the Galaxy when it is invisible under the greater light of the moon. These prominent stars mark the position of prominent constellations. If so, it may be profitable to note them.

The author of "*Mazzaroth*" has said: "Twelve of the decans, or extra-zodiacal constellations, are on this circle, or way, in the order here given. The first six having meanings referring to the first coming of the promised seed of the woman, descend from Cepheus, the branch, to the Southern Cross. Thence the Galactic circle, re-ascends to Cepheus, whose other character, the crowned king, becomes peculiarly appropriate, the six ascending emblems having meanings applicable to the return of Him, whose second coming in glory to receive His kingdom, is the theme of unfulfilled, as the first is of accomplished prophecy."²

The names of the emblems are then given, and if there could be no objection raised to the selection there is no doubt that the view would be noteworthy. But, the question at once arises, why limit this to the decans? Scorpio lies on the Way, as also does a large part of Sagittarius. It takes in the feet of the Twins, the feet of the Centaur, and a part of the Altar. There should be no arbitrary selection to support a theory. Dr. Seiss, in his fascinating work on the

² *Mazzaroth*—Part II. p. 25.

Zodiacal signs, gives a list of twelve, and includes the Scorpion, Gemini, and the Altar, omitting three of the signs given by Miss Rolleston. But his selection also excludes some of the signs which are as unmistakably on the Way. While unable to follow these able writers, I am not the less struck with the general truth that the signs on the Galaxy do point emphatically to the Advent of the Redeemer in His humiliation and in His glory. Who, for example, can look at that wonderful group of signs visible in our Southern Hemisphere, lying in close proximity to each other and on the Milky Way, and the more prominent because of the brightness which here attends it, without seeing their suggestive relation? An ordinary star chart of the Southern Hemisphere for the month of April, at about 9 p.m., will show the Scorpion just coming up on the south-eastern horizon; above it, and following on the Milky Way, lie the Altar, Centaurus, the Cross, and Argo, the confines of Argo and Scorpio being nearly equidistant from the Cross. This latter constellation seems a natural centre to the others, because of the presence of the Coal Sack, lying beneath one of its outstretched arms. That pear-shaped cavity has its own suggestive hint of the grave as the end of man, but the Cross above it tells of that which can rescue him from death. It was the Advent of the Redeemer in His humiliation, as shown by the Centaur, which opened the way of safety for man by means of the Cross. It was the great Enemy, as depicted by the Scorpion, who brought the disaster upon man, and who has the "power of death"; but by the obedience unto death, even the death of the Cross, the Redeemer has conquered the enemy and triumphed over him. Over against the Scorpion, and on the other side of the Galaxy from it and the Cross, lies the Altar, the burning fire, the penalty for sin,—the token of irrevocable judgment. How close together lie the Cross and the Altar. He who rejects the one must have the other. On that side the Cross is the

second death ; on the other, in its spreading grandeur, lies the great ship Argo, and here is safety—safety for the redeemed from death and the enmity, and its issue the second death, to the safety of the ship—His possession. The teaching of that set of signs is expressive, and belongs emphatically to the work of the Redeemer in His first Advent.

Ascending the Milky Way, between the two Dogs, and over the feet of the Twins and the horns of Taurus, we meet with another group—Auriga, Perseus, Cassiopeia, and Cepheus. Auriga, the mighty Shepherd, who holds His Redeemed in safety ; Perseus, the powerful Breaker, who slays the enemy and carries away his head ; Cassiopeia, the woman freed, to whom it is given to make herself ready that she may share in the regal position in fellowship with Cepheus the king, who is the last in this group. Surely it is evident that this group of signs as significantly belongs to that second Advent of the Redeemer, who, when He comes in power, shall “reign before His ancients gloriously.”

The Eagle and the Swan contribute to these findings, for the first tells of His death at His first Advent, and the second speaks of His return. It is an item not to be passed over lightly, that this group of stars forming the Swan is conspicuous because it is in the shape of a giant cross, and that, in it is what is known as the Northern Coal Sack, another opening in the Milky Way which, like the more striking southern opening, baffles the theories of our astronomers, but which without undue stretch of imagination, may be used by us as a reminder that He who, by the work of the cross, paid the pledge of redemption from the grave, shall return to effect the ransom in full (“I will ransom them from the power of the grave”—Hos. xiii. 14) ; for when He “who is our life” shall appear, then shall the grip of the grave cease over those who shall be ransomed from its thralldom.

Thus, if, interested in the noblest of sciences, we seek to search out the beauties and wonders of the Galaxy, that we may know more of God and His purposes in creation, let us also with hearts filled with adoration for His love learn to associate therewith, as we view its course in varying degrees of brightness, and the star groups which lie upon it, the no less wonderful story of redemption. In so doing we lose nothing which belongs to the study of that—

“Torrent of light and river of the air,
Along whose bed the glimmering stars are seen
Like gold and silver sands in some ravine
Where mountain streams have left their channels bare !

LONGFELLOW.

Nay, its value is immeasurably enhanced by the contemplation of that great truth that Creation has its purposes fulfilled in and by Redemption, and that stamped upon the brilliant evidences of the former, are the pictured prophecies of the latter.



CHAPTER II.

THE ANTEDILUVIAN GOSPEL.

"With what glorious characters, with what forms of deathless beauty, defiant of decay, the sky was written over! Go out this evening beneath the old rolling dome, when the starry scroll is outspread, and you may still read the reveries of the marvelling minds of the antique world as fresh in their magic loveliness as when they were first stamped in the heavens."

ALGER.

THE foregoing chapters set forth the teachings of the starry signs which were known to, and handed on by, the early fathers of the race. Presuming that an interest has been aroused in the subject, and that some will desire to follow the study further, it may be well now to gather up and present in concrete form the great doctrines of revelation which are therein proclaimed. A survey of the whole will be profitable, as affording indications of the "things surely believed" by the patriarchs, and useful as an aid to the understanding of the nature of the Gospel message then preached, the needs it was designed to meet, and the manner in which they should be satisfied.

Of late years earnest students of the Bible have strenuously urged that more attention should be paid to the fact that God has dealt with man in successive dispensations, and that the Bible reader must distinguish these dispensations, lest he form erroneous conclusions and fail to "rightly divide the

Word of truth." It is believed that the recognition of the truth that God has dealt with man dispensationally, has resulted in larger and clearer views of the divine purposes. The great facts and principles revealed remain the same throughout, but the setting changes, and there is further revelation of details adapted to each new dispensation.

If, then, it is important that the written Word should be studied with due regard to the dispensations, lest we go astray—if we should not expect to find the clearness of the Christian doctrines in the Mosaic economy, or the advanced teaching of the Mosaic Law in the days of the patriarchs, equally so should we not expect to find either in this heavenly picture-book. The time when it was given, the dispensation in which it had its origin, must be in large degree the guide as to the nature of the doctrines which, scripturally considered, may be looked for. The evidence which the Zodiac itself affords, shows that its date of origin goes back to nearly 3,000 years before the Christian Era, and tradition, in agreement, has ascribed it to Seth and Enoch. If it is of antediluvian origin, and its teaching at all consonant with that of the Bible, then we may expect that its presentation of the hope of redemption will be harmonious with the early history of men and the Divine purposes then made known;—in a word, in accord with the facts and purposes of that dispensation. Now, it is not difficult to test this, and at the same time help our own understanding of the nature of the hopes cherished in that primitive faith. It can be no profitless enquiry to find the foundations upon which in after days God built His further revelations,—that revelation which selected a nation for theocratic training, and that which now calls, and disciplines for the honour of future service.

What, then, according to the Scriptures, was known by men before the Deluge concerning themselves;

their relationship to God during life; His judgment; their future beyond the present life; and the prospects that the race should ever come from under the effects of the Fall?

The knowledge as to his own nature was a first thing deeply impressed upon the mind of man. Even if yet in ignorance of the manner in which he came into being, as that is set forth in Genesis, the issue of the test placed upon Adam had yielded the historic knowledge of his mortality. It would seem from the narrative that to the first pair, ere the Fall, knowledge from some source had been acquired by which they knew exactly the nature of the evil to be incurred by disobedience. The threat made was not a vague, indefinite utterance, leaving them in doubt as to the effect of the penalty. So far as that part of the narrative is concerned which reaches to the record of the Deluge, there is nothing which hints at any possibility of man being other than he is declared to be—"made of the dust of the ground." The significance of the trial was also known. It was a test as to worthiness for continued life, and for high position—dominion,—and the failure under test involved the loss of the dominion, and the forfeiture of the life. But the threat given to the serpent carried with it the promise of a redemption from the state incurred by disobedience—a redemption which, to be adequate, must affect the entire question of life, and deal with the matter of the forfeited inheritance. Three things were clearly known—the loss of life by sin; the forfeiture of the inheritance; and the presence and power of the enemy. The threat made to the serpent covers all these and promises redemption. In the days of Enos men began to "proclaim in the name of the Lord," which we understand to mean that there were "preachers of righteousness," who publicly declared man's relationship to God, and pointed to a definite future reward for present obedience, or certain punishment for

disobedience, both to be introduced by an Advent of the Lord for judgment (Jude 14, 15).

It is interesting to note that it is with the facts of the Advent of the Seed of the Woman; the crushing of the serpent's head; the judgment; the bestowment of life; and the establishment of a righteous and happy kingdom, that the pictures of the star sphere are occupied. It is only in scanty outlines that we can trace from the Scriptures what was held and taught, but sufficient is given to show that the knowledge of those early men of God concerning the way, manner, and effects of redemption comprised much more of detail than is usually allowed. In this picture-scroll is the repetition of the great Bible facts, with the details which show how the great ends are to be reached. Its study widens our knowledge of the thought and aspirations of that time, and gives no unimportant contribution to the entire question of the origin of religious ideas. The star sphere, like the Scripture, points to one source—Divine revelation—as the fount of these ideas, and presents us with a definite purpose, and a clearly sketched plan by which that purpose is to be accomplished.

Is it not significant that the sphere should be so prominently occupied with great questions of eschatology? Although it sets clearly before us the sufferings of the Redeemer, it is in close connection with, and is the prelude for His "glory" that should follow. Life, Death, Judgment and Dominion, with its exhibition of regal authority and power, are the themes. Here are the pictures, and the things figured betoken realities. Here, in the Balance, the Victim and the Cross, is the life given to purchase redemption. In Capricorn and Aquila is pictured the death which ensues; whilst the tail of Capricorn, and the upspringing Dolphin show life possessed in resurrection. Aquarius depicts the life thus purchased freely bestowed upon the recipients. Is not this that universal issue of the great work of atonement which

is set before us in the after-statement, "The bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world"? It is the relation of the Redeemer to the sin-forfeited life of the wide world of men that is represented. It does not follow that all mankind will share in the full fruits of redemption, but up to the measure of the possession of the life that now is, with its possibilities for a future life to be bestowed or withheld at a judgment to come (Rom. ii.), so far do the teachings of the star groups carry us. Here is shown the basis on which God can deal with mortal, sin-stricken man, and by placing him under the Lordship of the Victorious Seed can raise him from the dead, and bring him before the Judgment, to be tried for the deeds done in the body. The sphere sets before man a great matter of life and death literally understood. In it life is life, and death is death, and there is no hint that man's nature is other than it seems. In it man is mortal, and he is dependent for life upon the work of the Redeemer. Nor is anything suggested which can be construed to favour the idea of a conscious intermediate state. The yawning chasm beneath the Cross tells of that from which man is rescued, and then for his further story, as told by the sphere, we must be content to take it up at the return of the Redeemer.

Modern views in regard to man's future put before us the conception of a habitation to be forever enjoyed in the heavens, the earth having passed from existence. The star sphere presents another view entirely. It centres all hope upon a kingdom *to come*. It presents as the object of the serpent's ambition the attainment of dominion, and whatever opposition may be shown towards the Redeemer's work has reference to this; and, on the other hand, the work of the Redeemer is towards the end of securing dominion. This is the theme of the conflict as set forth in the heavens, and the issue is that the Lion that is of the tribe of

Judah overcomes the enemy, and takes the dominion. It is that great conflict written all over the sky which is the theme of the Bible. It was in the minds of the early fathers of the race, and these pictures show how largely it bulked in their thought and faith; the prophets of Israel spake of it in their dispensation, and the Gospel history shows that it lay deep in the words and deeds of our Lord and His disciples. The future, as depicted on the sky and in the Word, is an earthly future, in a kingdom of heavenly origin and character to be established at the Redeemer's return.

Here, too, is delineated the judgment—judgment that is comprehensive, covering human history, and taking ken of the influence which the great enemy has had upon the story of men. As one of its operations, the enemies shall be destroyed. The language of the Bible is clear enough on this; but it is well to note that these pictures agree with its speech, and unmistakably show the fact and nature of that destruction. The subtleties that would persuade us that Scripture language is figurative and intends the exact opposite of its speech, fail to convince when we are brought face to face with the figures which require plain words for their interpretation. On the sphere, as in the Word, the "end is destruction."

It is worthy of special notice that in this series of pictures we have a sixfold delineation of the enemy. Six is the number which devout students have found to be Scripturally attached to evil. The closing pages of the Word point to the last great product of human evil strengthened by Satanic power and authority, and declare his number to be Six hundred and sixty-six. It is in remarkable accord with this Bible feature that the heavenly picture-book shows this sixfold presentation of the enemy. But, whilst there is clear evidence of the purpose and power of this great foe, there is in each case the accompanying testimony of the frustration of his designs, and the certainty of his ultimate overthrow. These six forms are Scorpio, Serpens,

Draco, Cetus, Lepus, and Hydra. In the three earlier figures the activity of the enemy is shown to prevent redemption and to secure supremacy—the Scorpion stings the heel of Ophiuchus, whilst with outstretched claws it would seize the Balance; Serpens rears its head to seize the Crown; and Draco wraps his scaly-folds about the Pole. But the later forms differ, and show the enemy weakening, as the accompanying forms of the Redeemer show His power. Cetus vainly essays to stop the river of the Judge; Lepus is in the attitude of flight; and, lastly, Hydra would speed away, but is already stretching out in the final throes under the instruments of destruction at work. In each case there is the accompanying prophecy of the enemy's defeat. Five times (the number of redemption) is the enemy under the foot of the Redeemer; Ophiuchus, Hercules, Orion, and Leo, show its destructive down-coming; whilst the position of Cetus, under the foot of Aries, indicates that he is under subjection. The arrow of Sagittarius; the clubs of Orion and Hercules; the sword of Perseus; and the suggestive figures, of Ara, Crater, and Corvus, make a sevenfold, and, therefore, a perfect presentation of destruction, complete, final. There are three subordinate pictures, in each case forming a part of the figure of the Conqueror, which testify to the overthrow. These are, Medusa, in the hand of Perseus; the lion's skin held by Orion; and Cerberus grasped by Hercules. If these are viewed as distinct representations of the enemy, then, with the six noted above, there is a nine-fold manifestation. Nine, is the number of Judgment: "It marks the completeness, the end, and issue of all things as to man—the judgment of man and all his works"—a confirmation of that which is taught in the pictures devoted wholly to the delineation of the overthrow.

Are these things of human origin only? Or do they not tell that He who gave the written Word made known these truths to the early patriarchs ere yet they

were enshrined in manuscript, and that they, under Divine guidance, set them before their eyes, and the eyes of their descendants as pictured hieroglyphs in the starlit heavens? These gave, and still perpetuate, the outlines of the great facts of the redemption of man from the grave; of judgment to come; of inheritance and reward; and the great issues of the conflict between good and evil—the destruction of the enemy, and of all who are on his side; and, lastly, the inauguration of the kingdom of God by the return of the Redeemer. These are the events which, revealed to man in that early dispensation, shall fill out and satisfy the hopes rooted and nourished by the first Gospel message, and which, adapted to the needs of universal man, shall answer all the demands made by the promise imbedded in the threat to the serpent—"the seed of the Woman shall crush thy head."



CHAPTER III.

THE SOUTHERN CROSS.¹

*"Lo! rebuking all earth's ominous cries,
The Cross of pardon lights the tropic skies."*

WHITTIER.

*"Then did I feel as one, who, much perplexed,
Led by strange legends and the light of stars
Over long regions of the midnight sand
Beyond the red tract of the Pyramids,
Is suddenly drawn to look upon the sky,
From sense of unfamiliar light, and sees,
Revealed against the constellated cope,
The great Cross of the South."*

OWEN MEREDITH.

"The Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

—GAL. vi. 14.

I HAVE two texts for my theme. One of these is the passage cited from Paul's masterly letter to the Galatians; the other is the starlit sky. One is found in language which is familiar to us as household words, as the utterance of a man who felt all that he said, and handed on the expression adopted as a watchword by all who have found the Cross of Christ to be the evidence of Divine grace in redemption, of Christ's obedience to God, and of His love to man. The Cross of our Redeemer has been the inspiration

¹ A Sunday evening address preached in the Church of Christ, West St., Auckland, and here given to show how the author, in the course of his public ministrations, has not hesitated to use the teachings of the heavenly picture-book.

to Christian service and is the pledge of the rewards yet to be bestowed. The other text is the beautiful constellation which we, of the Southern Seas, look upon as our symbol, and speak of with enthusiasm. In it, if we are quick to discern, shall we see the evidence of Divine power and wisdom, as it circles unceasingly above our horizon, declaring the glory of God. On these two, the text and the constellation, I desire to say a few words, and I hope to show that the tie which binds them together is not fanciful, but real, as they unite to bear their testimony to the purpose and the grace of God.

The themes suggested by the "Cross of Christ" are of profound significance to all. To the sinner seeking pardon for his sins, it is the means for his forgiveness, and the starting-point of his Christian life and experience; to the believer it becomes of growing importance, as its central position and influence are more clearly seen. As a general Bible fact it may be said that it is of deep importance because of its historical position, standing as it does midway between Creation and completed Redemption. From the Fall the finger of inspiration points steadily forward to it, until it becomes consummated fact. From that time we look back upon it, and note that its rays of glory point as unwaveringly to that glorious time when "the kingdom of the world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." It is of importance because of its relation to the wide world of mankind. The race was ruined, lost, and undone, doomed to extinction in the person of the sinning parents of the race; but the death-doomed pair were spared to beget offspring, and to people the world with beings like to themselves, looking to that coming Seed of the woman for redemption, who, by His work on man's behalf, should open the way to everlasting good. He who has believed in the love of God manifested in the Cross, rejoices in the present operation and virtues brought into existence by the death which it symbolises, and

accepts with gladness, as Lord and Saviour, the One who died upon it, and who rose from the dead. Does our interest in this theme seem to slacken, and our desire for a fuller appreciation of it become blunted? I would urge that endeavour should be made to centre attention upon it once again, that the larger, more comprehensive view which a further study of the Bible can supply may be obtained. Its signification is coeval with the history of man, for its beginnings lie in the early story of the Book of Genesis. Its fulfilment may be seen at the "place which is called Calvary." Yet, as we look at these two ends of the chain, viewing the historic necessity and prediction, and the certain accomplishment, we scan the history between, and note that the record which provides a means of redemption which has a universal relationship to man, a world-wide significance, does not seem to stay to make the fact known to world-wide man. The Bible is selective in its history, and as the record proceeds it gradually narrows until the story of Israel seems to absorb its interest. This is of Divine purpose, and to bring about God's theocratic designs; but it is not the less a matter for wonder if a universal provision is not made known to universal man. But a little consideration will show that if not stated, the provision itself is signified, and in a measure understood by early man. Look at the fact that when the sinning pair appeared before the Judge, He took "coats of skins and clothed them." Whence? Was it not by the death of animals?—a substitutionary death? If so, then the essential idea was conveyed in an ordinance which from that time was continued in the sacrifice of Abel, the offerings of Noah, and of the patriarchs.

But when I turn to my second text, the suggestion comes in that figure of the heavenly picture-book which we call the Southern Cross, there is the visible testimony that the death on the cross, in its world-wide relationship, was known in very early days, and the fact was perpetuated in this constellation as a memory sign.

Ancient astronomers assure us that from the very earliest times these stars were represented in the form of a cross, and they give its name as *Adom*, which means *the cutting off, boundary, the lowest limit*. The last letter of the Oriental Alphabets was *Tau*, and was always written in the form of a cross.

Those who have seen copies of the old star charts, showing the Zodiac, know that the stars are grouped in figures of men, women, dogs, bears, birds, serpents, etc., and amongst them is a Cross. Recent investigations have shown that these must have been arranged and put together in their various groups somewhere about the Euphrates Valley. Now, the singular thing we have here to note, is that the astronomers to whose descriptions we are indebted for these figures, do not describe them all from their own observations, but from tradition. This is known from the fact that if they had described from personal observation they must have omitted the Southern Cross, for it is something like 5,000 years since it was visible in those Northern latitudes. By the operation of what is called the precession of the equinoxes, the Cross gradually dropped below their horizon, and it will be thousands of years before it comes round to its ancient place. It is calculated that at the period when our Lord was crucified, the uppermost star of the group was just disappearing below the horizon at the latitude of Jerusalem, and it has not been seen there since about that time. It cannot be seen now save in latitudes far down towards the south. But the tradition of it remained, and so the ancients pictured on their charts the figure never seen by them, but handed down to them as having been seen by the "world's grey fathers." Dante, writing of that which he had not actually seen, says:—

"To the right I turned, and fixed my mind
On the other pole attentive, when I saw
Four stars ne'er seen before save by the ken
Of our first parents."

When Amerigus Vespucci was on his southern voyage and he beheld the brilliant stars of the Southern Cross, he congratulated himself on having rediscovered what had been for so many ages lost except to mythic fable, and boasted of having seen what had not been seen by civilised man till then, except by the first of the human race.

There are evidences worthy of close attention which seem to show a direct intention to perpetuate the hope of man in the work of the Cross, by the pictures which imagination drew around the stars; but this is a theme which requires a volume to develop. For my purpose in this address, I shall be satisfied to link the constellation, visible to us every starlight night, with the Bible story of the Cross in such a way that it may henceforward be a memory sign to call to mind some of the gracious and stupendous facts connected with the plan of redemption as it works through the Cross of Christ.²

As an asterism, this group has five stars visible to ordinary eyes. Keen sight may be able to discern eleven, and, of course, a telescope shows very many more. Someone has said that the "undevout astronomer is mad," Who can look upon the nightly array of stars without being impressed with the wisdom and the power of God? We look at that small group as it swings up from the east, and gradually rises until it is nearly upright on the meridian; then it sinks down and over to the west, always maintaining its relative distance to the stars about it, and to the common centre, the Pole. Since the world began it has circled thus, and will continue probably as long as the universe itself, a

²The Maoris have not only names for the principal stars, but have formed them into constellations. The chief of these is Te Waka o Tamareretī—the canoe of Tamareretī. This takes in the stars of Orion's belt, which formed the stern; the cable is formed by two prominent stars of Centaurus, and the anchor is the Southern Cross—the happy omen for the Maori canoe; the Cross being its anchor, it will be its stay in every storm, and save it from shipwreck!—TAYLOR'S *New Zealand*.

visible testimony to Divine wisdom and power. The Cross of Christ speaks to us no less of the wisdom and the power of God, for it was planned from the earliest ages, Christ being the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and its dynamic force is set forth in the message which is the power of God unto salvation.

Is there no significant memory link in the fact that the Southern Cross disappeared from the sight of Israel when the Lord was crucified? Of course, it was sinking gradually before this, but when they rejected the crucified Messiah, and turned their backs upon Him, the Cross became to them a stumbling-block, this Cross disappeared from their gaze. They, for their rejection, have become the tribes of the wandering foot. The Lord has said, they shall see Him no more until they say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." The Cross and its virtues were and are invisible to them.

The Cross of Christ speaks to us of His humiliation, "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." But it was thus as the working of the Divine order. So the sign in the heavens was low down in the heavens to the men of that time. But the Scripture, having presented the Cross as the bottom rung of the ladder of humiliation, shows also that it is just by that death of humiliation that the hope of man becomes bright and clear. If the grave is to be opened, it is because of the Cross of Christ. He died that we might live. Is it not significant that as you look at the picture in the heavens the Cross is seen standing on the brightest part of the Galaxy? It glows amid the shimmering glory of that brightest spot in the heavens. Yet beneath the outstretched arm of the Cross lies the blackest portion of the heavens, the Coal Sack,—this curious island in the great celestial river of light; one of a great number of similar irregularities in the Milky Way, though in no other is the passage, from extreme richness in stars to almost total vacuity, so sudden! Says Proctor: "Is

it an accident that over this large dark space, covering about fifty square degrees, there is not a single lucid star, whilst all around its borders lucid stars are strewn in plenty? The whole surface of the heavens exceeds the Coal Sack some 800 times in extent; and as there are about 6,000 lucid stars, one might expect seven or eight such stars to be found in the Coal Sack. But this is far from being all. The neighbourhood of the Coal Sack is much richer in lucid stars than other regions in the heavens; so that it is just where stars should be most richly distributed that this vast black spot makes its appearance."³ Surely it does not need much prompting of the imagination to connect with this strange picture-association the thought of the hymn:—

"There lies beneath its shadow, but on the further side,
The darkness of an awful grave that yawns both deep and wide,
And there between us stands the Cross, two arms outstretched
to save,
Like a watchman set to guard the way from that eternal grave."

We have by no means fathomed all the wonders of the Cross of Christ. He who becomes a student of this Word will find more and more to marvel at, as he notices how all doctrines are linked together, and to it. Every accession to the knowledge of Divine things throws the Cross of Christ into yet more luminous beauty. So this Cross in the heavens the more it is examined the more wondrous it is. Its brightest star, *Alpha*, is seen, in a telescope of sufficient power, to be really a combination of five stars—two bright, and three fainter. *Gamma* is a double star, one of which is a beautiful yellow; whilst *Beta* has a red companion. It is by further study and closer examination we learn of the wonders of the Cross, whether it be in the sky, or in the Scripture.

Isaiah wrote of Christ that He was "despised and rejected of men." Paul wrote that to the Jews the Cross

³*Other Suns than Ours*, p. 95.

was a stumbling-block—none could see any beauty in Him, or in His death. The Roman hanged his slaves upon the cross, and viewed that death as the most ignominious that could be inflicted, and the general impression was produced, as the message of salvation through One who was crucified was heard, that there was no beauty that one should desire Him. But those who have accepted His Lordship have found unexpected beauties in the Cross of Christ. The ideas concerning it have changed. The symbol is now displayed by high dignitaries of the Church, and is worn by ladies as an ornament. The student of the Word has seen in its story that which has attracted his imagination, and the view cherished by the believer is that the beauties of the Cross are many and various. So also in this Cross in the sky, the student learns there are many unexpected beauties which the powerful instrumental aids of modern days have revealed. Just beneath the arm of the Cross which reaches over the Coal Sack there is a star known as *Kappa*. A glimpse of the beauties that surround this will cause the beholder to catch his breath with admiration. It is as if one saw suddenly opened before him a casquet of brilliant gems, flashing with yellow, green, and ruby hues, in the midst of about 120 stars, crowded together, showing the ordinary starlight. Here is a "superb piece of fancy jewellery" hidden 'neath the arm of the Cross. It makes one think of Malachi's reference to the Lord's jewels, kept until the day of numbering—"They shall be mine in the day that I do make." How sweet and how safe to be hidden beneath the Cross, sheltered and protected!—

"I take, O Cross, thy shadow for my abiding place:
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of Thy face,
Content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,
My sinful self my only shame, my glory all the Cross."

Yet one other thing. The old astronomers tied the various constellations together in groups of four—

twelve groups, making forty-eight signs in all. The Southern Cross is the second in a group, of which the first is the Scales, or Balance, and the third is the Victim. The fourth and last of the group is the Northern Crown. That is, that the Crown follows the Cross and the Victim. It is so in the Bible revelation; it is so in the heavenly picture-book. Is it not significant that God "hath highly exalted Him," that to Him the order in both should agree? The theme of the Scripture is "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." Because of the obedience to death, "every knee should bow, and every tongue confess Him Lord." The pathway to the throne of universal dominion led by way of the Cross, and the Lord has trodden it.

Those who are sheltered 'neath the Cross, and trusting in the efficacy of that death, looking for present guidance to Him who died upon it, living a life of faithful service to Him, shall receive the reward when the Lord of Glory shall return—the Crown of Life, of incorruption, and of glory.

So, as we look upon this heavenly sign, so familiar to all who dwell in these Southern lands, may it become to us a memory-link which shall call up the remembrance of the precious things accomplished and made available by the Cross of Christ. Here may we see testified the love of God, the obedience of the Christ, the humiliating death; then, the wonders it proclaims, and the beauties it reveals; and note its position as the pathway to the Crown—the glory that shall follow. So shall the truths of redemption be strengthened within our minds and hearts, and we shall obtain a fuller conception of the assertion, "The heavens declare the glory of God." In the starlit sky shall we learn to see, not only His creative wisdom, and His omnipotence, but in the signs grouped in the heavenly picture-book His purposes in redemption, as these were portrayed to early man, and amongst them this Southern Cross bearing its lustrous testimony to the

central fact of Redemption—that which above all other things declares the glory of God, for—

"In the grace that rescued man
His brightest form of glory shines;
Here on the Cross 'tis fairest drawn
With precious blood in crimson lines."



STAR NAMES.

IN the foregoing pages I have sought to set prominently before my readers the idea of the unity of the heavenly picture-book. There can be no room for doubt remaining in the mind of any careful student who has given attention to these interdependent designs that the Sphere was intended as a concerted whole to set forth some definite teaching. It cannot be viewed as resulting from the gradual piecing together of designs by successive artists, but must be accepted as presenting ideas current at one period of time, and expressed in this form for the benefit of contemporary and succeeding generations.

Quotations already given in the body of this work have shown that leading astronomical and archæological authorities, who have bestowed attention upon this subject, are agreed in admitting the unity of the Sphere, and that the intention of the framer or framers was to convey some religious teaching. Sympathy to this extent does not mean that they agree as to what is taught, and certainly must not be understood as being in favour of the view set forth in this work. But I am persuaded that the more closely this whole subject is examined, the more will the evidence tend to support the main outline herein given. I am confident of this because the testimony gathered recently has furnished clearer

evidence as to the place and time of origin of the Sphere; has more strongly emphasised its unity; has thrust from the place of prominence the Grecian myths hitherto associated with it; and has definitely asserted its pronounced religious aspect. It remains for these authorities to agree upon what is the religious teaching it conveys. There is one objection raised against the view set forth in these pages, and as it is made by one who has given attention to the subject, and who, upon astronomical grounds asserts the unity and didactic intent of the heavenly designs, it deserves notice. That objection is, virtually, that the translation given to the star names in "Mazzaroth," and similar works is untrustworthy. If it be so that the names are unwarrantably translated to uphold a theory, then manifestly the theory must be correspondently weakened in the thought of a serious student. Readers of astronomical literature will meet with other translations of these names;—translations which are widely diverse from those adopted by the author of "Mazzaroth," and which are claimed to be in close agreement with their exact lexical signification.

In view of this objection, there ought to be something said in justification of the meanings assigned in this work to these names, lest I be charged with the folly or something worse, of sending forth a book which adopts without reason a series of meanings held to be arbitrarily coined to support an ingenious theory.

Star names, as we now have them, come to us mainly in Greek or Arabic dress, and the objection assumes that we ought not to go behind the modern interpretation of these names, the current surface meaning being decisive. But we submit that this is to ignore considerations which arise from the antiquity, origin, and design of this wonderful book. It is agreed that these forms have come down to us from a time "beyond the memory of man," and that

care was taken by the originators to select figures and to group them in a way which would express "some religious belief." If these original framers gave names to the figures thus conceived, we may be sure that they would be such as clearly expressed the idea intended to be conveyed. It would be utterly incongruous to imagine that they would give names not in harmony with the figure portrayed, or that failed to express the idea of the picture. To ask us to believe that the thought and imagination of those who planned the figures could get no further in the naming of the component stars, than to mark the "beak," the "tail," etc., is to invite a drop from sublimity to bathos.

This may be conceded, and yet the objection remain on the ground that the original names are lost, and are replaced by others given by men who knew not the original purport of the Sphere, and these are the names with which we have to deal. But it is well to be advised of the fact that there is nothing like certainty in the modern interpretation of the names which have come down to us. One writer says, "The Arabic names as we know them now have been handed down through the Spanish writers of the 'Alfonsine Tables' of 1252, which were printed in Venice more than two centuries later. It is not surprising that some of them are difficult to understand.¹ An examination of Mr. Allen's monumental work² will show the hopeless confusion which exists in regard to this matter. He says: "From the results of modern philological research it is possible that our long received opinions as to the derivations of many star names should be abandoned, and that we should search for them far back of Greece and Rome." To this we would add "and Arabia." More than once in the course of

¹ *Scotsman*, Feb. 26, 1901.

² *Star Names, and their Meaning*, p. 432.

his exposition has he to call attention to the fact that names of stars supposed to designate some part of the figure are in quite a different place. For example; in Andromeda is a star known as Alpheratz. On this, Allen says, it is "from the Arabians' *Al Surrat al Faras*, the Horse's Navel, as this star was formerly associated with Pegasus, whence it was transferred to the woman's hair." This star from its position may have been easily assigned to either constellation, but attached to the figure of Andromeda the name is an absurdity, and whilst more appropriate if located in Pegasus, it is yet inexpressive, yielding no meaning to the symbology of the figure. In the left foot of *Andromeda* is a star named *Al Maach*. This says Mr. Allen is "from *Al 'Anak al 'Ard*, a small predatory animal of Arabia, similar to a badger, and popularly known there as *Al Barid*. Scaliger's conjecture that it is from *Al Mauk*, the Buskin, although likely enough for a star marking the left foot of Andromeda, is not accepted; for Ulugh Beg, a century and a half previously, . . . gave it the animal's title in full. But the propriety of such a designation here is not obvious in connection with Andromeda, and would indicate that it belonged to very early Arab astronomy."³ Such testimony somewhat weakens the objection based upon the commonly accepted interpretations of the star names. The weakening of that does not, of course, strengthen our own view, but it makes room for it to be heard, and that is all which at the present stage need be claimed.

In Mr. Brown's admirable volumes on "Primitive Constellations" are many star names gathered from the Euphratean Valley which have reference to the symbolical signification of the figures, and which in many cases agree closely with the interpretations we have given, as appears from the instances given in

³ *Ibid* 37.

foregoing pages. It may be said that only such instances have been chosen as do bear some likeness, and that the many which do not so agree have been passed over without mention. This is true; but I have discriminated because I am convinced that equally with other peoples, the dwellers in the Euphratean Valley early lost the true signification of the sphere, and losing grip of the great central truths taught by it, they lost the significance of the pictures, and the import of the names, and so perpetuated what were but broken traditions. It is yet too early to speak with certainty as to the exact views held by the Babylonians and Assyrians regarding the Sphere as a whole. There is a wealth of material yet to be examined, but this must of necessity take time. "The catalogued Tablets in the *K* collection of the British Museum alone number 14,230, the far greater portion of which are astronomical."⁴ Many of these may be of but little importance, but as they cover a period "from about B.C. 500 to the third millenium B.C.," it is quite possible that much valuable information is yet to be obtained regarding early conceptions of the constellation figures. The whole tendency however, of Mr. Brown's work is to show that there was a deep significance attached to the figures, and that the nearer we approach to the source and time of production, the more are we likely to get to the original meaning.

Yet again, Mr. Maunder, in an exhaustive paper to which I have made several references, shows by an imposing array of cumulative evidence that the Sphere was first planned in a district "no further South than N. latitude 36 deg., and not further North than N. latitude 42 deg." "Necessarily there is an uncertainty of two or three centuries in the date, but speaking in a broad and general way, the place and date of

publication which our picture bears impressed upon it is N. latitude 39 deg., and 2800 B.C.⁵ By an equally careful and convincing line of testimony the approximate longitude of the place is determined to be "but a single region, namely, that which is bounded by the Black Sea on the North, by the Mediterranean on the South, by the Caspian on the East, and the Ægean on the West."⁶ These conclusions force attention upon the peoples who inhabited the Upper Euphrates Valley, and shut us up to such evidence as may be culled concerning their names for these figures and the component stars. The date and place put us in touch with Bible times and history, and may we not add, with the religious views they held, or which were existent among them? In an earlier chapter, on the religious beliefs of the Antediluvians, I have sought to place the evidence which the Bible supplies concerning their hopes. It is no slight support to our view of the Sphere, that the Biblical representations do easily harmonise with the pictured outlines. So far as we know, no other consistent representation of this heavenly picture-book has been presented, and still less is it likely that it can be shown to agree in its main outlines with any other record. We say this without considering the question of the names, but simply upon the grounds of the representations, their positions, and their relationship to each other. It is but a step to the necessary belief that whatever were the names given to the asterisms they must have accorded with the design of the pictures. In the Bible history relating to that time and place, all names borne by persons or places have distinctive meanings, indicative of moral qualities, or commemorative of events. Thus they become memory-tokens, to perpetuate the idea they convey. It is a warrantable assumption that a similar process was followed in the naming of the stars.

⁵The *Nineteenth Century*, Sept. 1900.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁴*Primitive Constellations*, Vol. II., p. 12.

This is a just conclusion, whether or not we view the names as given primarily by Him who "callet them all by name," or as conferred by men to put their beliefs into mnemonic form for themselves and their descendants.

There is one way in which this can be traced, and that has been consistently followed by Miss Rolleston in her scholarly work, "Mazzaroth." She believes that as the Arabs and Greeks and others have carried over the traditions of the signs in broken and legendary form, which may all be traced to a common original, so have they carried over many of the names, not translating them, but retaining them without holding the original sense, and all that is necessary for the student is that he shall refer these name-forms to the Hebrew roots, and he will obtain a consistent and reasonable confirmation of the wisdom of the step. It is no slight argument in favour of the contention that the results show such harmonious relationships. It is quite possible that as an original worker in this field the learned writer made mistakes, and in some instances adopted names which are confessedly modern, and have no relation to the ancient Sphere and its teachings, but in the main I feel no hesitation in saying that as a working hypothesis merely it was justifiable, and its application has justified it many times over. For instance, note the names cited in the former part of this chapter. The meaning of the star-name *Alpheratz* as given is absurd,—The Horse's Navel, especially if the star was originally in the head of Andromeda. This name referred to the nearest Hebrew root yields PRTS,—parats, (*al* being the article). The word is found in our Scriptures translated Break, or Broken,—“He BREAKETH me with breach upon breach.”⁷ “The wall of Jerusalem is BROKEN down.”⁸ This meaning is in exact harmony with the position and attitude of the figure.

⁷ Job xvi. 14. ⁸ Neh. i. 3.

The name assigned by Allen to *Al Maach* has no relation to the figure of Andromeda, and indeed calls attention away from it to an insignificant animal which nowhere appears on the Sphere; in the Scripture the word MChH from the root NChH yields the meaning of a “blow,” “smiting,” the verb is given in Isa. liii. 4, “SMITTEN of God.” This again is in close harmony with the figure, and certainly is more expressive than a name which takes us quite away from the figure, and yields no meaning at all.

I lay claim to no such special scholarship as this enquiry demands. I write as a plain man who has given close attention to what has been written by abler pens, but these few paragraphs will show that I have not ignored the objection, and they will also show the ground on which I unhesitatingly yield to the claims of the consistent method of the writer of “Mazzaroth,” as commending itself to unbiassed judgment. It sets forth a sane principle, and the remarkable results confirm its soundness. These translations are chiefly used in the foregoing pages, but I have not hesitated to make use of reliable information obtained from many sources. Numerous astronomical works have been read, and any thing likely to be helpful as contributing to a fuller acquaintance with the theme under discussion, or affording any item of interest regarding the asterism under consideration, I have used in the hope that attention may thereby be more firmly fixed upon the great central theme of the heavenly volume.

It is no small gratification to the author to know that the presentation of this subject has been the means of introducing to some the study of the noble science of Astronomy. The beauties of the heavens become wonderfully attractive to those whose attention is drawn to them, and it is a pleasure to be able to awaken in any the desire to know them better. If, together with that, we may see the wondrous story of redemption inscribed in heaven's glittering points of light, the gain to mind and heart will be unspeakably great.

The more we know of the wonders of the heavens, the more clearly we see the meaning of the pictured outlines with which men of yore encircled the stars, the better should we hear and understand the voiceless message in which

THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY
OF GOD.

